

Leamore Primary School

Bloxwich Road, Walsall, WS3 2BB

Inspection dates 22–23 October 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Inadequate | 4 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Inadequate | 4 |
| Quality of teaching | | Inadequate | 4 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Inadequate | 4 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures

- Leaders have not been effective in improving the quality of teaching and driving up standards since the previous inspection. Consequently, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is inadequate.
- Teaching is inadequate. Often, teachers do not make clear what they want pupils to learn and the work they give does not demand enough of all pupils, particularly the most able.
- In too many lessons, the pace of learning is slow. Teachers do not check pupils' progress closely enough in lessons or comment precisely enough on how well they have done and how their work could be improved.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to practise their speaking skills or to use their calculation skills in working out mathematical problems.
- Pupils' achievement is held back when teachers do not pay enough attention to improving pupils' skills, such as writing at greater length in different subjects and understanding the underlying meaning in the texts they read.
- Pupils behave less well in some lessons that do not meet their needs.
- Senior and subject leaders' checks on teaching do not focus enough on pupils' progress and achievement in lessons and in their written work.
- The school's planning for improvement is not tightly focused on the key priorities that need tackling.
- The governing body has not been fully aware of the extent of the school's weaknesses and it has not held the senior leaders to account for them.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has made an accurate assessment of the challenges facing the school. His actions in promoting partnerships with other schools and improving the consistency of teachers' assessments are showing early gains.
- The school's provision for music enriches pupils' learning.
- The teaching of phonics (learning the sounds that letters make) is improving reading across the school.
- Most pupils behave sensibly and feel safe at school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. They also looked at examples of pupils' written work with both senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with one randomly selected group of pupils, and senior and middle leaders. Telephone contact was made with the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector met a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's data relating to pupils' current and recent progress, a summary of the self-evaluation, monitoring reports, the school improvement plan, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- The response to the online Parent View questionnaire was too small to be taken into account. Inspectors talked to 14 parents and carers informally in the playground before school.
- Inspectors considered 32 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Krishan Sharma, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jan Edwards

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with 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.

Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is above average, but it is below average for those who are supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above average. This is extra funding provided by the government to support certain groups of pupils. In this school, it applies to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has experienced considerable changes in its staffing since the last inspection. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2013 as did four newly qualified teachers. A supply teacher is covering the class of a teacher who is on maternity leave. Five out of eight classes are currently being taught by teachers new to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to good or better so that all pupils make good progress as they move through the school, by ensuring that teachers:
 - make it clear what they want pupils to learn in all lessons
 - set work that expects more of pupils which is well matched to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly the most able, so all pupils are fully engaged and behave well
 - increase suitable support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, so they make rapid progress
 - move learning on in lessons at a brisker pace
 - check closely on pupils' progress in lessons so they know how well they are doing.
- Raise pupils' achievement in English and mathematics for all groups of pupils by:
 - improving the clarity and fluency in pupils' spoken language and of children's speaking and listening skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - ensuring pupils understand the underlying meaning in the texts that they read in different subjects to improve their reading skills
 - helping pupils extend their ideas in longer pieces of writing in English and in other subjects
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise their calculation skills in solving more practical and real-life mathematical problems.
- Increase the capacity of leaders, managers and governors to improve the school by making sure that:
 - senior and subject leaders make accurate and rigorous checks on the impact of teaching on

the progress of different groups of pupils during lesson observations and reviews of pupils' written work

- plans for improvement are fine-tuned to establish the key priorities in securing speedy improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement
- the governing body has a fuller and accurate picture of the school's weaknesses and effectively challenges senior leaders to tackle them with a greater sense of urgency.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Pupils achieve low standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. This represents inadequate progress and underachievement in relation to their starting points.
- The end of Key Stage 2 results for 2012 and the provisional results for 2013 show that when Year 6 pupils leave school, they are not adequately prepared to succeed in their secondary school.
- Children in the Nursery enter with skills below those typical for their age. Their progress is not fast enough due to the lack of good teaching. In 2013, too few children left Reception with good levels of development, a proportion which was well short of the provisional national figure.
- Overall standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have remained low and they have sometimes been significantly below average.
- Pupils' speaking skills are not as strong as they could be across year groups. Although pupils are keen to respond to teachers' questions and talk to their peers, their responses are not always clear or fluent. The development of pupils' oral skills does not receive the attention it deserves in some lessons.
- Reading is improving, but pupils' progress is not fast enough and is uneven across the school. Pupils' skills in phonics are improving due to their regular teaching across the school. The school has already identified the need to improve pupils' skills in understanding the meaning of the texts they read in English and other subjects.
- Progress in writing is slow and varies across the school. The samples of written work seen during the inspection indicate pupils write for a range of reasons and they understand the use of the basic punctuation. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to extend their ideas through longer pieces of writing in English and other subjects.
- Pupils like working with numbers and can calculate accurately. Their progress is weak because they do not practise their calculation skills enough in working out practical and real-life problems.
- Progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs varies across the school. Although many make the progress they should, some of them do not. School leaders are aware of this issue and have plans to bring about improvements.
- The proportion of the most-able pupils working at and achieving the higher-than-expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics is not as high as it should be. Many of them underachieve because teachers do not provide enough challenge for them.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, the attainment in English and mathematics of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium was lower than others in the school. Eligible pupils were nearly two terms behind others in English and nearly three terms behind in mathematics. Senior leaders are already alert to this gap and have provided further support for those pupils whose progress is lagging behind.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Over time, the quality of teaching has been inadequate and it has contributed to the underachievement of pupils. All teaching seen during the inspection required improvement or was inadequate.
- Often teachers do not make it clear what they expect pupils to learn by the end of the lesson and do not set tasks that provide a suitable challenge to match the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly for the most able. These inadequacies contribute to pupils' underachievement. The pace of learning is too slow in some lessons, which restricts pupils' progress. In weaker lessons, some pupils lose interest and become restless leading to occasional low-level disruption.
- Mostly, teachers ask questions that test pupils' prior knowledge and understanding at the start of lessons, but their checking of pupils' progress during lessons is not consistently good. As a

result, teachers are not always clear how well pupils are learning.

- Extra support is helping disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding to catch up with others in the school. These pupils do not make rapid progress because their needs are not always accurately identified and the support they receive is not matched well enough to these needs.
- In Nursery and Reception adults encourage children to talk, but they miss many opportunities where they could intervene to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, adults do create an environment for learning that helps children to work and play together and they relate well to each other.
- Marking is improving and it often provides guidance on what pupils could do to improve their work.
- The teaching of phonics is now well established and increasingly contributes to pupils' confidence and skills in reading.
- Typically, teachers promote pupils' social skills well. As a result, relationships are good across the school. Teachers and other adults expect pupils to show commitment to their work and most pupils meet their expectations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- In some lessons, a few pupils lose concentration, particularly when teaching does not engage them. On occasions, it leads to low-level disruption.
- A small minority of parents and carers expressed concern about inconsistencies in the management of behaviour by staff. In discussion with inspectors, pupils assured them that adults deal with unacceptable behaviour or any incident of bullying fairly and promptly. Inspectors found that unacceptable behaviour is not a persistent feature in the life of the school.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of different forms of bullying, including that which is prejudice-based or relates to the misuse of the internet. Pupils feel safe at school and know that adults will always listen to their concerns.
- Attendance continues to improve slowly. It is now just below average. Senior leaders remain alert to maintaining this trend of steady improvement.
- In Nursery and Reception, children move around responsibly in their classrooms and outdoors. They enjoy taking part in all the activities planned for them.
- Most pupils behave well in and around the school. Pupils are keen to learn and most get on with their work in their lessons, even those where the teaching is weaker. They treat each other and adults with courtesy.

The leadership and management

is inadequate

- Leaders have been ineffective in arresting the decline in pupils' achievement which set in after the last inspection in 2011. The current senior leadership team has an accurate view of the school's performance and fully understands that there is a lot of work to be done to secure improvements in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- Current plans for improvement have the right priorities, but there are too many to be tackled and the plans are not specific enough about the key priorities relating to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. The headteacher has made a secure start in improving the consistency in teachers' assessments and making use of partnerships with other schools so staff can learn from good classroom practice elsewhere.
- Senior and subject leaders' checks on teaching and their reviews of pupils' work have not been sufficiently rigorous or accurate. Monitoring has not focused sharply enough on the progress that different groups of pupils make in lessons and in their written work. As a result, weaknesses in the quality of teaching have not been fully recognised and then tackled.
- The analysis of data on pupils' progress enables senior leaders to allocate extra help for groups

such as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who are supported by pupil premium funding. The school's provision, however, is not yet fully effective, because the progress these groups make is not consistently good enough to narrow the gap between their attainment and that of others in the school.

- Arrangements under discussion for the management of teachers' performance fully recognise the need to link teachers' pay to their performance in the classroom.
- The school has made suitable arrangements to use the new primary school sport funding and to evaluate its impact on pupils' physical well-being. Pupils are set to experience a wider range of physical activities with increased opportunities for them to participate.
- The range of subjects taught and other planned activities rightly focus on developing pupils' basic skills, but they do not always cater for the needs of all groups of pupils including the most-able pupils. The provision for music is particularly strong as it offers instrumental tuition and participation in a choir. Together with the basic curriculum, the enrichment activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Most parents and carers are satisfied with the care the school provides for their children. They feel that they can approach the school for advice and they will be listened to.
- The local authority provided a 'light touch' support to the school when its results caused no concern. It has increased its support for the school, due to a serious dip in the school's adjusted Key Stage 2 results for 2012 and the provisional results for 2013.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body does not fully understand the extent of the school's weaknesses, particularly those relating to the quality of teaching and the achievement of different groups of pupils. Consequently, it has not held the senior leaders to account for them. Governors are supportive and recognise that they need to strengthen their links with the school. They are aware that they have been too heavily reliant on what was reported to them, including the summaries of pupils' performance data rather than finding things out for themselves. The governing body ensures that the safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Governors understands the need to link any increases in teachers' pay with their performance and pupil outcomes.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 104157 |
| Local authority | Walsall |
| Inspection number | 427127 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 237 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Clifton Lemord |
| Headteacher | Andrew Denton |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14 February 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01922 710514 |
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