

# Great Marsden St John's Church of England Primary School

Trent Road, Nelson, Lancashire, BB9 0NX

**Inspection dates** 19–20 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
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.

- Pupils' achievement at Key Stages 1 and 2 is inadequate. Standards are too low in English and mathematics and pupils do not make enough progress across the school from their individual starting points.
- Standards have declined since the previous inspection and school leaders, managers and governors have not acted quickly enough to bring about the necessary improvements. Weaknesses noted in the previous inspection have not been tackled.
- Gaps in the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium and all other pupils in the school widened even further in 2013.
- Over time, there has been too much inadequate teaching. Teachers do not adapt their teaching in response to the progress pupils make in lessons. This means that the work pupils are given does not meet their varying needs.
- Teachers' marking does not give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.
- In lessons that fail to engage pupils' interest, low-level disruption by a minority of pupils occurs.
- Subject leaders are not given enough opportunities to review the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility. Their skills in evaluating pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are underdeveloped.
- Leadership and management over several years have not held teachers adequately to account for pupils' low attainment and inadequate progress because the leadership of teaching is weak.
- The data on the progress of different groups of pupils have not been used effectively by leaders to ensure that all pupils make at least expected progress through the school.
- Governors have not been rigorous enough in holding school leaders to account for pupils' poor performance and have not acted quickly enough in addressing weaknesses in the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher and the acting headteacher have quickly formed an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Children make good progress in the Reception Year.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. Most pupils behave well.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 14 lessons or parts of lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and heard a number of pupils from Years 1 and 6 read.
- Meetings took place with the executive headteacher, acting headteacher, senior leaders, staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's data on pupils' progress, and records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 22 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and considered the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Christine Millett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Chris Maloney

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), 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 supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- At the time of this inspection, an executive headteacher had been supporting the school for three days a week for the last five weeks and an acting headteacher had been in post for two weeks. Three-quarters of the teaching staff have only been in post since September 2013.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is all at least good by:
  - providing staff with opportunities to observe high-quality teaching so they recognise what constitutes good and outstanding teaching
  - making sure teachers apply the advice they receive on how to improve the quality of their own teaching
  - matching learning tasks more effectively to pupils' wide-ranging abilities
  - teachers using day-to-day assessment to adapt their teaching to the changing needs of pupils in lessons
  - eradicating low-level disruption by making sure that pupils are more actively engaged and interested in lessons
  - improving the marking of pupils' work so that it informs pupils about how to improve their work and then allowing pupils time to respond to this guidance.
- Accelerate rates of progress in all subjects, particularly in mathematics, so that the achievement of pupils of all abilities is at least good by:
  - improving pupils' numeracy skills to ensure they have a secure base for further learning and providing opportunities for pupils to apply these skills to real-life situations and in subjects other than numeracy
  - improving standards in reading by strengthening younger pupils' knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make)
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to read more widely.

- Improve leadership and management at all levels, including governance, so that there is a greater collective capacity to improve the effectiveness of the school by:
  - ensuring action plans have a sharp focus on improvement and are evaluated regularly
  - implementing fully the appraisal of individual teacher's performance so they are held rigorously to account to ensure all pupils make progress that is at least good
  - developing the skills of subject leaders in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects so they can provide helpful feedback to teachers and then ensure that teachers make effective use of this advice
  - updating regularly the newly introduced tracking system so prompt action can be taken to support pupils who are in danger of underachieving
  - increasing governors' involvement in checking the school's performance so they can identify strengths and areas for development, have a clear and realistic understanding of school effectiveness and are able to hold teachers to account
  - undertaking an external review of governance, 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.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

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## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Pupils' progress over time is inadequate. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils significantly underachieve. This is because, from their individual starting points, all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and the most able, make too little progress in English and mathematics. Over time, very few pupils make the rates of progress expected of them, particularly in mathematics.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding below those expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Reception Year, make good progress and so enter Year 1 with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with those expected.
- In Key Stage 1, progress in reading is inadequate because pupils' knowledge of letters and the sounds they make is limited. In 2012 and 2013, the proportion of pupils who reached the required standard in the Year 1 national reading check was below the national average. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is low in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, over the last three years, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has declined and is significantly below average in reading, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils' attainment in national tests is lower in mathematics and reading than in writing.
- In 2013, the proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding in Year 6 attained standards even lower than that of their classmates in English and mathematics. Their attainment in these areas was the equivalent of being two terms behind their peers who were not eligible for support through this funding. This gap in attainment between pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils in the school is widening in English and mathematics. The progress made by both groups of pupils is inadequate.
- Work in pupils' books shows that activities in mathematics do not extend learning well enough for all groups, including the most able. They do not have enough opportunities to explore different problem-solving techniques. Pupils in all year groups have very few opportunities to apply their mathematics skills in a practical way to extend their understanding.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate over time because pupils make inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Although a minority of good teaching was seen during the inspection, the majority required improvement. Not all staff have had the opportunity to observe best practice in other schools.
- The teaching of mathematics is not good enough. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge of basic skills, so are unable to use different approaches to solve mathematical problems quickly and accurately. They have too few opportunities to apply these skills to real-life situations or in other subjects.
- Day-to-day assessments are not used consistently throughout the school by teachers in order to quickly make changes during lessons in response to how well pupils are learning.
- Teachers do not always match work to the needs of pupils. In some classes, pupils have a very wide range of ability and the degree of difficulty in tasks is too often based on the amount of work produced, such as the number of sentences written, rather than the challenge within them.
- A few teachers expect high-quality work from pupils, set a good example and achieve good results in terms of pupils' outcomes in lessons, but this is not the case consistently across the school. For example, the low expectations of some teachers as to pupils' capabilities are reflected in untidy handwriting and the poor presentation of work, as well as teachers' tolerance of low-level disruption and occasional lack of focus by some pupils. However, this is mainly because teachers do not give enough thought to the choice of subject matter for lessons and

often, this does not maintain pupils' interest in their learning.

- The marking of pupils' work does not help them to improve. In samples of work scrutinised, some basic errors were not corrected, for example, in spelling. In the main, work is marked regularly but comments do not give sufficient detail in order to be helpful to pupils. There is little evidence that pupils act upon the limited advice that they are given and correct their mistakes.
- There is no consistent approach to the teaching of reading through the use of phonics. Pupils have a limited understanding of letter sounds and have difficulty blending different sounds and so read words incorrectly. Some older pupils who read to the inspectors did not demonstrate positive attitudes to reading and reported that they had not been in the school library this term.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are guided and supported well in their learning. They make good progress because of the range of activities available to them. Some of these are with an adult and others they choose for themselves.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Where teaching is weak, particularly when work is too easy or pupils have to sit for too long listening to the teacher, some pupils become inattentive and restless. As a result, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning require improvement.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the different forms bullying can take. They say that there are occasional instances of bullying but are confident that any concerns they have are dealt with quickly by adults. Surveys of the views of parents and staff showed that a small number were of the opinion that behaviour in school was not good. The majority of pupils are friendly, polite and considerate. Most try their best even when not excited by their learning.
- Scrutiny of the school's records regarding behaviour, as well as the observations inspectors made of life in the school, show that the behaviour of most pupils is good. For example, movement around school and in the dining hall is orderly. Pupils look smart in their school uniform and were keen to explain how the colour of their ties showed to which house group they belonged. Pupils work in a pleasant, clean and safe learning environment. They say they feel safe and secure in school. They could give many examples of how to ensure their own personal safety and that of others. For example, by following rules for road and rail safety, stranger danger and the safe use of the internet.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. Pupils arrive at school on time. They move quickly to lessons without a fuss.
- Children settle quickly into the Reception class. They learn to follow instructions and, as a result, behave well. Their personal, social and emotional development improves because of the opportunities children are given to work and play together.

### **The leadership and management**

### **are inadequate**

- The school's leaders, including governors, have not sufficiently dealt with issues raised at the previous inspection, especially in developing pupils' basic skills, improving pupils' performance in mathematics, or developing effective systems to check the quality of teaching and learning. The actions taken by school leaders after the previous inspection lacked the rigour required to bring about rapid improvement. Consequently, the school's effectiveness has declined since 2011 and is now inadequate.
- The performance of different groups of pupils is not tracked or looked at carefully enough by school leaders to ensure they make at least the expected rate of progress, or to identify pupils at risk of underachieving.
- The role of subject leaders is underdeveloped; as a consequence they do not play a significant part in the monitoring of teaching and learning in their subjects. Action plans do not have a sharp focus on improvement.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers apply the development points that are identified from

the school's checks on their teaching. As a result, the quality of teaching is not improving as it should. Teachers are being held increasingly accountable for the progress of pupils. However, a system for the appraisal of individual teacher's performance is not yet in place.

- The school's promotion of equal opportunities is inadequate because too many pupils in different groups, including those with special educational needs, those supported through the pupil premium funding and the most able do not make enough progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The school contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is seen in the caring attitudes of almost all pupils towards each other and visitors. Links with the church contribute to their spiritual development.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of all pupils effectively because it does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics through other subjects.
- Finances overall are adequately managed. However, the pupil premium funding is not used effectively enough to enable pupils known to be eligible for this support to narrow the gaps in their attainment in English and mathematics between in relation to other pupils and enable them to make enough progress to catch up. The new Primary School Sports funding is being used to improve the teaching of basketball and netball skills and to allow pupils to attend a range of inter-school tournaments.
- The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire recorded that they would recommend the school.
- The executive headteacher and the acting headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, have quickly formed an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In the short time that they have been in school, they have moved swiftly to start addressing some of the key areas. For example, they have introduced a system for tracking pupils' progress, written a school development plan and implemented a cycle for checking the quality of teaching. They have also identified the need for accurate self-evaluation and teacher appraisal. However, none of these is sufficiently well embedded to secure capacity for further improvement.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the overall effectiveness of the school and fully recognises that pupils are not achieving as well as they might. Since the previous inspection the local authority has provided a range of support to improve the effectiveness of leadership and the quality of teaching and learning. It has carried out regular progress reviews and provided full reports. However, this support so far has not reversed the falling trend in pupils' achievement.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body have not held senior leaders to account for pupils' achievement. Governors are aware that, at the end of the last academic year, pupils' standards and the progress they made had not improved enough since the last inspection.
  - Governors do not know how well staff are carrying out their responsibilities. Although they have been rigorous in checking the performance of a very small number of teachers, a system of appraisal is not in place for all of them.
  - Governors manage finances adequately. They are familiar with how the pupil premium and Primary School Sports funding are used but have not yet ensured that these are having the necessary impact. Governors make sure that statutory requirements for safeguarding and procedures for vetting staff and visitors are met. They make sure the school site is safe and secure. The governing body is very committed to improving the school.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119436
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	426332

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Glenn Tunbridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lesley Fitzpatrick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01282 615055
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