

Claregate Primary School

Chester Avenue, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, WV6 9JU

Inspection dates 29–30 January 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The governors, senior and subject leaders have made some improvements since the last inspection, but these have not secured consistently good teaching throughout the school.
- The progress of some groups of pupils is patchy, especially the most able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils supported through extra government funding.
- The youngest children’s speaking and listening skills are not developed through a sufficiently wide range of activities.
- In some lessons, the work that pupils are set is too easy for some and too hard for others.
- The quality of marking, although good and effective in several classes, is inconsistent.
- Neither school leaders nor governors have examined, with sufficient rigour, the impact of extra government funding on the progress of those pupils it is intended to support.
- The school’s evaluation of its own performance is too generous because it does not take enough account of the variations in the rates of progress of different groups of pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Standards in writing at the end of Year 6 rose in 2013. Results in spelling, grammar and punctuation were above the national average.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make faster progress than other groups of pupils.
- The pupils behave well. They and their parents say they feel safe.
- Most pupils have neat handwriting and present their work carefully.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 27 lessons. Six of these were carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and at playtime, heard some pupils read, and held two meetings with groups of older pupils.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, and policies about keeping pupils safe. They also examined the work in pupils' books, and a range of data about their progress.
- The inspectors held discussions with teachers, the headteacher, two members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of 19 parents were analysed through the Parent View website. In addition, the views of parents who spoke to inspectors were considered. The inspectors also considered the views expressed in questionnaires returned by 27 members of staff.

Inspection team

Christopher Parker, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Nin Matharu	Additional Inspector
Suha Ahmad	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than average for schools of this type.
- Six out of 10 pupils are White British. The rest of the school population is made up of pupils from a range of minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs at school action (pupils who need extra support with their learning) is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below the national average. This extra government funding supports those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, any in the care of the local authority, and pupils who have a parent serving in the armed services.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- There were five teachers with temporary contracts working in the school at the time of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to the point that it is consistently good throughout the school, so that pupils – particularly the most able, those supported by the pupil premium, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs – make consistently good progress by:
 - taking every opportunity to develop the youngest children's speaking and listening skills
 - making sure that the most able pupils are always made to think hard in lessons
 - better organising how groups of pupils are taught, so that time is used to full effect, particularly at the start of lessons
 - marking pupils' work in a way that consistently highlights how it can be improved.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - targeting the pupil premium funds on those pupils it is intended to support, in order to ensure that the attainment gap between them and their classmates closes quickly
 - frequently checking that the activities supported by the pupil premium funds are having an impact on the standards attained by this group of pupils
 - extending the role and influence of subject leaders so that they can establish greater consistency in the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that the school website provides all the required information for parents.

Undertake 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 management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In some year groups, too few of the most able pupils and those supported by the pupil premium are making good progress. Although there have been improvements in some pupils' progress, the most able are not consistently reaching higher levels, and the gaps between those supported by the pupil premium and their classmates are not closing quickly enough.
- The results of national tests in 2013 reveal a considerable gap in the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium and that of their classmates. At the end of Year 6, these pupils left the school a year behind their peers in reading and mathematics, and six months behind them in writing. Throughout the school, the progress of these pupils is patchy, and not fast enough for them to catch up.
- Not all of the most able pupils are making the progress expected of them. In 2013, just over half of the pupils who scored highly when they were in Year 2 did so in Year 6 in writing. In mathematics, the proportion of these pupils who reached the very highest level was lower than the national average.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is a mixed picture. Some small-group and one-to-one teaching has proved effective and resulted in some pupils making rapid progress, notably in writing in Year 6; others, however, are making steady rather than good progress.
- The children start school with skills that are not quite as well developed as those expected for their age. Although they make a steady start in the Nursery, the adults do not do enough to increase the children's use of language so that they have a good start when they enter the Reception Year, where the children make faster progress.
- Most pupils are making the progress expected of them, and some – particularly in Years 5 and 6 – are making faster progress. This is because most English and mathematics lessons cater well for many pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make faster progress than other groups in most classes.
- Pupils' writing in Years 5 and 6 reflects the emphasis placed on correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, but spelling and punctuation are not given the same importance in some other year groups. Similarly, high expectations of handwriting result in older pupils presenting their work very carefully. However, some younger pupils do not grip their pencils correctly.
- In 2013, the results of the spelling, grammar and punctuation test at the end of Year 6 showed pupils to be a year ahead of the national average. Results in reading, writing and mathematics were about a term ahead of pupils nationally. This is a very similar position to that found when these pupils were tested at the end of Year 2.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Some steps have been taken since the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching, and to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, the teaching is not yet strong enough in all classes to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress and reach the standards of which they are capable.

- The time available in lessons is not used to full effect in all classes. Sometimes, books are not ready and have to be given out after the lesson has started. On other occasions, the introductions to lessons do not grab pupils' attention because the teacher repeats what pupils have already learned in the previous lesson without introducing any new learning.
- Effective teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation in Years 5 and 6 has improved the accuracy of many pupils' writing. While there is a good range of writing in different subjects, not enough of it makes use of interesting texts in order to improve the way in which the most able pupils compose and develop their writing so that it grips the reader.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. In some classes, comments made by their teachers help the pupils to improve their work. In others, for example in Year 2, the teacher had marked lists of adjectives which the pupils planned to use in their writing, but had not corrected the spelling of some words. Consequently, pupils spelt these words incorrectly in their writing.
- Some pupils' comments indicate that they find some work too easy. Sometimes, the work that pupils are set is too easy for some and too hard for others. Where teachers recognise this quickly and clear up any misunderstanding, pupils learn effectively and their progress increases. However, there are occasions when misconceptions are not dealt with quickly enough.
- The adults in the Nursery do not always step in quickly enough to develop the children' speaking and listening. In the Reception classes, the classrooms are bright and interesting, and the adults involve the children in interesting conversations that help them to make good progress in speaking and listening.
- The teaching of the sounds that letters make is not yet consistently good, but it is taught accurately and every day. This is why more pupils in Year 1 did well in the national phonics screening check last year than in the previous year. Pupils are able to use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make to read unfamiliar words.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school's work to keep the pupils safe and secure is good, and its procedures are strong. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and not to communicate with strangers. They also visit 'Safeside', where they learn about staying safe in everyday situations. Pupils and their parents agree that they feel safe at school.
- The behaviour of the pupils is good. In lessons, they listen carefully to the teacher and rarely need reminding to work quietly. Pupils present their work neatly, and most are developing a good style of handwriting. Their books show they are proud of their work and they keep their classrooms neat and tidy. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is a little above average.
- Discussions with pupils in the playground and dining hall indicate that behaviour is usually good. Pupils say that incidents of misbehaviour or infrequent occurrences of bullying are dealt with promptly. The school records all incidents – however minor – in great detail, and follows them up in the following days and weeks to make sure that they are fully resolved.
- Some of the older pupils take on additional responsibilities; for example, as prefects. Pupils say that they like and enjoy school, and are particularly appreciative of the wide range of clubs on offer. They especially enjoy the lunchtime activities and the after-school opportunities to play sport run by sports coaches.

- Behaviour is managed very well. There have been no exclusions in the recent past, and the school is able to point to examples of the support that has been given to pupils to markedly improve their behaviour. The help provided to these pupils has allowed them to increase the rate of progress they are making.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has been successful in making some improvements to teaching and in increasing the overall rate of progress made by pupils in some classes. However, leaders have not ensured that progress is consistently good, especially for the most able, those supported by the pupil premium, and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The senior leaders' analysis of pupils' progress is comprehensive. It takes account of each pupil's progress term by term and covers all groups in the school. The school is now rightly focusing its analysis and detailed improvement plans on those groups who are not doing as well as others. These plans set out the progress that is expected as a result of the actions that are outlined.
- Leaders have carried out a good deal of research into the factors that have an impact on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. The school's use of the pupil premium on group teaching and learning resources has not been 'ring-fenced'. Consequently, the impact of these funds is difficult for leaders to determine, because it is spread across a wider group of pupils.
- The subject leader for English has been instrumental in raising standards in writing. The leader for mathematics has recently taken on the responsibility temporarily. These leaders monitor their subjects comprehensively but are not yet as effective as they could be in working alongside others to improve teaching in order to ensure that all groups make consistently good progress.
- Each teacher's performance is appraised. Targets are closely linked to the school's improvement plans. Pay awards are determined by performance, including teachers' contribution to activities for pupils beyond the classroom. Some applications for pay awards have been rejected by the governing body because these criteria have not been met.
- The curriculum is made interesting for pupils and covers a broad range of subjects. Pupils have good opportunities to write in a range of subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils had been writing about archaeology in the Indus Valley. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage is more effective in the Reception classes than in the Nursery.
- The extra funding for sport is being used to provide the pupils with a greater range of opportunities for physical exercise, both during and after school. Three sports coaches lead a range of lunchtime activities for pupils. The teachers are also working alongside coaches to improve the teaching of physical education. Pupils feel they benefit from these activities.
- The local authority inspector visits the school three times each year and, consequently, has an overview of how well it is performing. The local authority inspector contributed to recent training, focusing on raising expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors make effective use of the local authority services to manage the budget. They use their expertise to keep a careful watch on the financial situation.
 - The governors know that there are aspects of the school's performance where further

improvements are needed. They are provided with a lot of data by the school, and have received training so that they can use it.

- The governors are kept informed about what the pupil premium funds have been spent on and have debated how future funds will be spent. However, they do not have a clear picture of the impact that this spending is having on the progress of the pupils who should be benefiting from it.
- The governors check carefully that the school’s safeguarding arrangements are in place and staff have been appropriately trained. Consequently, safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. However, governors have not ensured that the information for parents on the school website fully meets requirements.

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

Unique reference number	104310
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	431167

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	445
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Webster
Headteacher	Mick Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2012
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