

Hartsbrook E-Act Free School

Town Hall Approach Road, Tottenham, N15 4RX

Inspection dates 29–30 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Since the school opened, pupils have made inadequate progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Over time, teaching has been inadequate in all classes.
- The majority of children fail to reach expected standards by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is inadequate.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations. Far too many pupils consistently underachieve, especially boys and the most-able.
- The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language are inadequately met.
- The school's leaders have not brought about the necessary improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Systems to record and monitor safeguarding concerns are poorly organised.
- Attendance is inadequate. Systems to check that pupils are safe when they are absent from school are weak.
- The school's view of the quality of teaching is overgenerous. It does not take into account the impact of teaching on pupils' past or current rates of progress.
- The local governing body has not been rigorous in monitoring the school's performance or in ensuring that systems to record safeguarding are robust.

The school has the following strengths

- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading.
- There are early signs that children's progress is beginning to improve in Year 1 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in four lessons; three were joint observations with senior leaders. Brief visits were made to all classes.
- During these observations, the inspector assessed pupils' work, spoke to pupils about their learning, looked at teachers' planning and considered the role of additional adults in lessons.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, and members of the local governing body.
- School documents and records were scrutinised including information about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance, school improvement planning, the school's evidence on how well it is doing, and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and spoke with some about their experiences in school. Playtimes were observed when the inspector talked informally with pupils.
- The inspector also talked informally with parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day. She considered seven responses that had been made to the online questionnaire Parent View and 10 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- During this inspection, the inspector asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of the multi-academy trust's services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess how well the support provided by the multi-academy trust is helping to improve the academies for which it is responsible.

Inspection team

Ann Debono, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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

- Hartsbrook is much smaller than the average-sized infant school. It has Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes.
- It opened as a free school in September 2012 as part of the E-Act Academy Trust.
- The school occupies a temporary site in a further education college. It plans to move to a new site in September 2015.
- The majority of pupils are from White European or other White backgrounds, or of Black African and Black Caribbean heritage.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils from service families and those in local authority care) is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Highgate School, an independent day school, works in partnership with Hartsbrook E-Act Free School. It provides a part-time Vice-Principal with responsibility for teaching and learning.
- A National Leader in Education (NLE) from Bandon Hill School provides support.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take urgent steps to ensure that all pupils receive consistently good teaching by:
 - providing work that matches the needs and abilities of all pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language, boys and the most able
 - monitoring pupils' progress closely and tackling underperformance.
- Improve pupils' achievement in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - accurate assessment information in the Early Years Foundation Stage is collected and used to plan learning experiences that challenge children
 - pupils practise their letter and word sounds so that more achieve expected standards in the Year 1 phonics screening checkpupils in all classes are given more difficult work in mathematics
- Improve pupils' behaviour and safety by ensuring that:
 - all incidents of misbehaviour are monitored thoroughly, with appropriate actions agreed and rigorously followed up
 - systems to monitor and record safeguarding concerns are strong and efficiently organised.

- Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality by:
 - immediately establishing an effective system to monitor and eradicate high levels of absence, including clear procedures to monitor pupils' absence from the first day
 - working more closely with parents and carers to improve attendance.

- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
 - monitoring the quality teaching on a regular basis
 - paying greater attention to pupils' learning when evaluating teaching and taking swift action to improve teaching where needed
 - improving the school's action plan by including tight deadlines and clear responsibilities for the completion of actions
 - making sure that the local governing body uses accurate information to hold senior leaders and other staff to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress
 - holding all staff firmly to account for pupils' achievement.

- An external review of governance and the use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

It is recommended that newly qualified teachers are not appointed.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Children start school with skills that are typically below that expected for their age. Last year, children made inadequate progress in Reception classes. These children started Key Stage 1 at a disadvantage.
- The teaching of literacy in Year 1 last year was inadequate, as shown in the 2013 phonics screening check. Pupils were unable to read, write or spell competently at the end of Year 1. This poor legacy has continued for these pupils now that they are in Year 2. Work in their books and the school's own tracking data show that pupils' progress in English and mathematics is still inadequate. Most of the current Year 2 pupils were already at a disadvantage as the majority had not received any early years education. Poor teaching and poor progress have not helped them overcome the lack of progress made in the Reception class.
- Children's work in the current Reception classes and in Year 1 English books shows work of a slowly improving standard. This is not the same in mathematics. Work in books and easy worksheets show that the work set is undemanding.
- The majority of pupils do not achieve well enough, despite very early signs that some are beginning to make better progress. The school has plans to tackle underperformance. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are not supported to develop fluency in English and so they consistently struggle. Published test results and the school's data show that boys' achievement is below that of girls from an early age. These differences in achievement are not being addressed. Leaders do not identify who are the most-able pupils. The school predicts that no pupils will gain the higher levels in reading, writing or mathematics in 2014 national tests.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding are supported in small groups but leaders do not check to see if this arrangement is helping them to catch up. School data and work scrutiny indicate that they are approximately a term behind other pupils in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are identified for additional support which they receive in class and through specialist support. Nevertheless, they still make inadequate progress, particularly in developing their writing and reading skills.
- Primary sports funding is used to provide a specialist teacher and the youngest pupils say that they are now better at some sports. However, school leaders have not assessed the impact of this funding on pupils' levels of fitness or health.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Over time, teaching is inadequate. Too many pupils consistently underachieve in English and mathematics. Leaders have not improved teaching enough since the school opened.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low or are incorrectly pitched. For example, in Year 2, mathematics books show an emphasis on simple operations with single numbers below 20. For most pupils, this is too easy. Conversely, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were expected to understand and use rhyming couplets in a study of a favourite poem. This was too difficult.
- The assessment of pupils' achievement is weak. Teachers' planning does not identify the specific support to be given or the knowledge and understanding that pupils are expected to learn. Consequently, too many pupils make inadequate progress, particularly those who speak English as an additional language, the most-able pupils, and boys.
- Teachers' marking does not show pupils how to improve their work. In some mathematics books, marking is a series of ticks but no more.
- In December 2013, pupils in Year 2 were given new English and mathematics books as a 'fresh start' because leaders thought that standards of work in their old books were inadequate. Work scrutiny during the inspection showed that the quality and quantity of work in pupils' new books

are still inadequate.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language find it difficult to understand what is required in lessons. Some try to help each other in their own languages. Teachers do not know how to improve pupils' fluency in English. School leaders have not made it a priority for teachers' training even though it involves 95% of pupils in the school.
- Teaching assistants provide variable support for pupils with special educational or other additional needs. In some cases, adults working with individuals adapt tasks during lessons to make sure that pupils are able to learn and remain engaged. However, this level of support is not always offered.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading. However, they correctly said that the books they take home from school are too easy.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement. Pupils have a sense of right and wrong, and assemblies provide opportunities for reflection. They play together well, but displays around the school and information for parents do not do enough to recognise or celebrate children's languages and cultures.
- The curriculum is enriched with additional after-school activities such as Spanish, ballet, rugby and choir. Many pupils choose to attend these groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Behaviour is not good because school records show that there have been incidents of a serious nature that were not followed up robustly.
- Normally, pupils move around school and during their lessons calmly. They listen respectfully and try hard to understand what is expected, even if they find it difficult to comprehend English.
- Pupils said that they know whom to tell if they are bullied. They believe that bullying will be dealt with effectively. They understand what to do if contacted online by a stranger because a school project on e-safety has improved their awareness of the dangers when using the internet.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. Records for behaviour, safeguarding and absence are disorganised and poorly managed. Incidents relating to child protection and contacts with external agencies are not logged systematically. These incidents are not always reported to the local governing body, indicating that monitoring by governors of safeguarding and behaviour incidents is poor.
- Pupils' attendance is low and leaders have been unable to demonstrate any significant improvement. On the first day of the inspection, one in 10 pupils was absent from school. In all year groups, there are examples of pupils missing education for over three days every week.
- This exceptionally poor trend is compounded by inadequate systems for monitoring attendance. Failure to make contact with a child's parents on the first day of absence is not followed up. On average, every day, the whereabouts of at least one child is unknown by the school. This means the school cannot be sure that those pupils are safe.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- When the school opened, all leaders were inexperienced in their roles. Leadership capacity is still lacking. The school is yet to appoint subject leaders for English and mathematics so these roles are still being covered by senior leaders.
- Despite the inexperienced leadership and the urgent need for additional leadership support, help has only just been provided by the multi-academy trust. A National Leader of Education has been appointed but she is yet to begin her work in earnest.
- Systems to check the school's performance are neither thorough nor accurate. The school's view of teaching is overgenerous because of insufficient focus on the progress pupils make as a result of teaching. Consequently, the school's leaders have not managed to improve teaching.
- Leaders do not monitor or evaluate the school's performance regularly enough and are over-

reliant on external reviews. However, leaders have not dealt with the recommendations in these external reports.

- School improvement planning is poor. Three school action plans exist. None shows specific timescales for the completion of actions or hold leaders to account for rapid improvement.
- Targets are unrealistic and over-ambitious. For example, pupils in Year 2 are expected to make up one year's deficit in attainment levels within the next four months. This demonstrates a lack of understanding about the true extent of the school's shortcomings.
- Systems to manage the performance of leaders and teachers are inadequate. Objectives are the same for all staff with insufficient regard for experience or leadership responsibility. Newly qualified teachers improved their practice last year because of support from the Vice-Principal. New middle leaders are keen to develop their responsibilities for areas such as parental engagement and information and communication technology. It is too early for these measures to have had any impact.
- Responses to the staff questionnaire were unanimously positive about the school. Parents who spoke to the inspector or who responded to Parent View were also favourable.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of all pupils as they do not all have an equal opportunity to succeed in their education. Although the curriculum covers a wide selection of subject areas through themed projects, the quality and quantity of work in history and geography are insufficient.
- Safeguarding procedures for the recruitment and vetting of staff meet statutory requirements.
- The multi-academy trust has not provided effective support for the school. It did not intervene quickly enough when the school's performance showed a decline. Regular termly checks did not uncover insecure school improvement systems. Leaders identified a lack of leadership capacity and requested additional support last year. The trust has recently responded with increased monitoring, extra support and the services of a National Leader of Education, but this has not had enough impact.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The local governing body does not have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Systems to monitor school improvement plans are weak and so governors have insufficient evidence with which to challenge leaders about the school's performance. Governors have not focused enough on pupils' progress and attainment in their scrutiny of the school's work. They have rewarded all staff without reference to pupils' standards or the quality of teaching.
- Governors know about the allocation of pupil premium, but have not adequately considered its impact on pupils' progress. Similarly, they have not measured the impact of the primary sports funding on increased participation or fitness levels.
- The local governing body has provided insufficient challenge to the school's leaders and has failed to make them properly accountable. They have not carried out independent checks on the school's work and have instead relied too much on external reviews for this information. As a result, they did not know that systems to monitor pupils' absence, , safety and serious behaviour incidents are inadequate.

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	138259
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	430668

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Free School
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	The local governing body
Chair	Dr Stuart Quin
Principal	Sonia Mallick
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0203 651 3800
Email address	sonia.mallick@hefs.sch.org.uk

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