

# Highfield Junior and Infant School

Highfield Road, Saltley, Birmingham, B8 3QF

**Inspection dates** 17–18 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders and governors have failed to improve the school since the last inspection. They have not been rigorous in checking that planned improvements have resulted in better teaching or improved achievement.
- The curriculum is inadequate. It does not provide pupils with a broad and rich range of learning experiences, especially in art and music.
- Safeguarding is inadequate. The school's arrangements do not meet statutory requirements.
- Governance is inadequate. Governors do not have the knowledge or skills to fulfil their responsibilities. This weakness has seriously impeded the school's progress.
- Some pupils are inattentive in lessons, especially when teaching does not interest them.
- Teaching is inadequate in Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils, especially the more able. Teaching does not build on what pupils already know, understand and can do.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment is often inaccurate.
- The school does not have a clear and consistent approach to the teaching of reading. This means that progress is slow for some pupils.
- Teachers' explanations in mathematics are sometimes confusing and inaccurate.
- Achievement is inadequate. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average in reading and mathematics. Progress in mathematics is inadequate. Mental calculation skills are weak.
- The quality of teaching in the Reception classes is not consistently good.

### The school has the following strengths

- School leaders' determination to promote fundamental British values is having a positive impact and pupils are benefiting from this focus. They are developing a good understanding of equality, democracy, tolerance and the importance of living within the law.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and is reflected in improved attendance rates that are now close to the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out without notice due to concerns about governance and because of a lack of information about the curriculum and safeguarding arrangements on the school’s website.
- The headteacher was absent at the time of the inspection.
- The Chair of the Governing Body was not available during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed 29 lessons or part lessons. Inspectors listened to pupils read, visited an assembly and observed playtime and lunchtime activities.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils’ books and at a range of books from the previous school year.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, senior leaders, subject leaders, the inclusion manager, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, four representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, for these to be considered but all inspectors spoke to parents informally at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils, teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors.
- The inspection team considered 29 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a range of documentation including evidence from the school’s website, the school’s own records of pupils’ progress, evidence from the checks made on the quality of teaching, written policies, documents regarding the management of staff performance and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Morag Kophamel, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Angela Westington	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Colin Lower	Additional Inspector
Sarah Davey	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

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Around three quarters are of Pakistani heritage and about one tenth is of Bangladeshi heritage.
- More than half of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority).
- Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language. A small number of pupils are at an early stage in learning to speak English.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is broadly average. The proportion of these pupils who have a statement or an education, health and care plan is also broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to good or better so that pupils' progress accelerates and their behaviour improves by ensuring that:
  - teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are consistently accurate
  - all adults have high expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, can achieve
  - teachers use their assessments to plan and provide interesting and challenging activities that build on what pupils already know, understand and can do
  - all teachers use marking to correct misunderstandings and give pupils' clear guidance so that they know what they need to improve
  - teaching assistants are clear about their role in lessons and the purpose of each activity
  - there is a clear and consistent approach to the teaching of reading, including phonics (the sounds that letters make), and that pupils are given reading books which match their reading ability
  - teachers place greater focus on teaching mental calculation strategies and use correct vocabulary and clear explanations and examples when teaching mathematics so that pupils make rapid progress.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that leaders at all levels:
  - rigorously check and evaluate how well the school is doing and use the findings to produce plans for improvement which are sharply focused on improving teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment
  - make prompt and regular checks to ensure that planned improvement strategies are being implemented in every classroom
  - have a thorough understanding of the requirements of the new primary curriculum and develop a school curriculum which meets these requirements as well as the particular needs of the school community.
- Improve safeguarding arrangements as a matter of urgency by ensuring that:
  - all the appropriate checks are made and recorded when new staff and volunteers are recruited
  - detailed and secure records are kept of any concerns raised by pupils, parents or staff about a pupil's safety or well-being (in line with statutory guidance and advice from the local safeguarding children's

board)

- the safeguarding policy is updated to reflect current statutory guidance and in particular, to include information about the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe from extremism and radicalisation.

The local authority should take urgent action to disband the governing body and put an interim executive board in place to ensure that the responsibilities and functions of governors can be fulfilled.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders and governors have not been successful in tackling the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- Leaders have an inaccurate view of the school's effectiveness. Their judgements on the quality of teaching are not focused sharply on its impact on pupils' learning over time. Leaders' evaluation of pupils' attainment and progress is not secure because they have not checked that teachers' assessments are accurate and consistent. This means that senior and middle leaders do not always identify and address underachievement quickly enough.
- Leaders recognise many of the weaknesses in teaching and have provided training and guidance for teachers. However, leaders have not been rigorous enough in regularly checking that the improvement strategies they have put in place are improving teaching and accelerating pupils' progress. As a consequence, leaders have been unable to ensure consistently good teaching across the school and this has resulted in inequalities for pupils in different classes.
- School leaders and governors do not have a development plan which sets out how they intend to improve teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress. Leaders have not yet made any plans to stop using National Curriculum levels and develop a new approach to assessing pupils' attainment.
- School leaders are working hard to ensure that the school is preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. They have ensured that pupils are taught about democracy and the importance of rules and laws and have made sure that the curriculum and ethos actively promote understanding and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Older pupils talked knowledgeably to inspectors about places of worship and festivals for different faith communities and discussed the fact that pupils 'could be friends whatever they believe'. During the inspection several teachers successfully used the Scottish referendum as a vehicle to teach pupils about voting and democracy.
- Despite these developments, the curriculum is inadequate overall. In some subjects, such as science, there is adequate coverage of the curriculum and the work in pupils' books shows progression through the school. However, in other subjects, such as art and music, the curriculum is too narrow and does not allow pupils to make good progress. This was illustrated by the fact that older pupils were unable to name or talk about the work of famous artists and musicians.
- Leaders who have responsibility for subjects have begun to evaluate the school's curriculum and have started to make some changes but because these leaders are not all clear about the requirements of the new primary curriculum, progress is slow.
- Safeguarding arrangements are inadequate. Leaders have not ensured that all the correct checks are made when new staff are appointed. The safeguarding policy is not updated regularly and does not set out how the school keeps pupils safe from extremism and radicalisation. Governors have little understanding of their responsibilities with regard to keeping pupils safe.
- Although these weaknesses are substantial, all staff do have regular training in safeguarding. They are clear about what they should do if they are worried about a pupil or if a pupil reports any form of abuse. All staff have had Prevent training so that they understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping pupils safe from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- The leader who has responsibility for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, carries out her role conscientiously. However, she was not able to evaluate or provide evidence of the impact of different interventions and support for pupils with special education needs.
- The pupil premium funding is used to provide pupils with additional support from teaching assistants. An extra teacher is employed to deliver catch up sessions for pupils who are identified as underachieving. Additional support for pupils with speech and language difficulties is also purchased. School leaders are not able to provide evidence of the impact of some of these interventions and so cannot evaluate their success.

- Teachers have regular reviews of their performance and are set targets for improvement which are linked to whole school priorities. However, during the inspection leaders and governors were unable to demonstrate how performance management is linked to pay progression.
- Almost all of the parents who spoke to inspectors said that they were happy with their children's education. A few parents said that they believed that their children could achieve more.
- The primary school sports funding is being used to provide specialist training for teachers so that they improve their skills in teaching physical education and sport. It has also been used to employ coaches and health mentors. As a result, more pupils participate in lunchtime and after school sports clubs.
- The local authority has not provided effective support to the school, especially during the time that the headteacher has been absent. In particular, the local authority has not acted promptly in giving enough guidance to school leaders to help them deal with weaknesses in governance.
- The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.
- The governance of the school is inadequate:
  - Governors have little or no understanding of their roles and responsibilities and do not have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Apart from one staff governor, the governors who met with inspectors had no knowledge or understanding of the school's curriculum, financial arrangements and safeguarding systems including the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe from the risk of extremism and radicalisation. They did not understand how pupils' achievement compared with that of pupils nationally and were not aware of performance management arrangements or of the use and impact of pupil premium funding. These findings were confirmed by the recent external review of governance. Governors accepted that they are ineffective.

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

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Behaviour in lessons varies. Where activities are interesting, pupils generally work with positive attitudes and pay good attention. However, when lessons are dull or tasks are too hard or too easy, some pupils lose concentration and in a few classes there are instances of low-level misbehaviour.
- A very small number of pupils show a lack of respect to some adults in the school.
- Pupils generally behave well at lunchtimes and playtimes and move sensibly around the school building and grounds. Pupils report that nearly all pupils get along well and play and learn happily together.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. During the inspection, school leaders were unable to provide any evidence of how they recorded initial concerns raised by staff, parents or pupils, about pupils' safety or well-being, or show how they tracked any further action taken, including referrals to the local authority.
- Older pupils say that there are occasional incidents of name calling, including some remarks about skin colour and faith, among younger pupils. They explain that these pupils 'have not been in the school long enough to know better'.
- Other than this, pupils say that there are few incidents of bullying and parents and pupils agree that those that do occur are dealt with effectively. Pupils understand the different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and were keen to explain that they know how to 'zip it, block it and flag it'.
- A good range of trips and visits broaden pupils' experience and cultural awareness. Pupils enjoy a variety of after school clubs which include sporting activities, music, art and dance clubs. Procedures for following up absence are thorough. Attendance has improved and is now close to the national average.

**The quality of teaching is inadequate**

- Teachers' assessment of the standard of pupils' work is often inaccurate. As a result, the work given to pupils is sometimes not at the right level and that given to the most-able pupils is too easy. For example, in one Key Stage 1 class, pupils were asked to subtract a 1 digit number from a 2 digit number using a number line. Some pupils were unable to complete the work because they could not count back accurately while a few of the most-able pupils could complete the calculations quickly and easily without using a number line.
- In some classes, teachers plan activities for pupils that are repetitive and dull and have no clear learning purpose. For example, pupils sometimes copy out sentences into their books, even though adults cannot explain how this is helping them learn.
- The teaching of early reading, including phonics (the sounds that letters make) is not effective. The reading books given to pupils are not all suitable because the words in them cannot be decoded or 'sounded out' using phonics. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read too few books and do not make rapid enough progress.
- Teachers' explanations in mathematics are not always clear and are sometimes inaccurate. Some teachers do not use correct mathematical vocabulary. This means that pupils find teachers' explanations confusing and sometimes develop misconceptions. For example, after asking pupils for different terms that can be used for subtraction and setting work on subtraction calculations, one teacher asked pupils to complete their 'sums'. Teachers do not place enough emphasis on the teaching of mental calculation strategies.
- Some teaching assistants have limited impact on learning because they complete administration tasks or observe teaching and have little interaction with pupils during lessons. Others, including many in the Reception classes, are more effective and are skilled at explaining methods or questioning pupils to check understanding.
- Most of the work in pupils' books is marked but teachers do not all give pupils clear guidance on what they should do to improve their work. Sometimes teachers do not identify and correct basic errors or misunderstandings and so they persist.
- There are pockets of more effective teaching. Pupils make good progress when teachers: plan engaging activities which take account of pupils' prior learning; provide a good level of challenge; are skilful in questioning pupil to check understanding and quickly identify and tackle misunderstandings.

**The achievement of pupils is inadequate**

- By the time they leave the school, too many pupils do not have the reading skills and proficiency in mathematics which will enable them to succeed in the next stage of their education.
- Standards in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 are below the average nationally. In 2014 the proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 declined considerably and were well below average in reading and mathematics.
- In 2013 and 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in the national phonics check for Year 1 pupils was below the average for pupils of the same age nationally. Inspectors found that in Key Stage 1, pupils are not all using their phonic skills when reading and often guess at words rather than sounding them out.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, standards remain below average in reading and mathematics. Teachers' assessment information suggests that standards in writing are broadly average but the work in pupils' books does not support this judgement. Many pupils continue to make basic errors in punctuation and in the way they construct sentences.
- In 2013, the attainment of pupils who are known to be eligible for additional support through the pupil

premium funding was below the national average for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment of these pupils was around a term behind that of their classmates in writing and mathematics. The school's own information about attainment indicates that this gap widened in 2014 when eligible pupils were around two terms behind in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Progress in mathematics is of particular concern. In 2014 around a third of pupils did not make the expected rate of progress and only a fifth of pupils made better than expected progress. Girls underachieve in mathematics compared with boys. Pupils known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding make slower progress in mathematics than other pupils. Some older pupils continue to make errors when carrying out basic mental calculations.
- The most-able pupils do not all make good progress. For example, during their time in Key stage 2 a quarter of the most-able pupils did not make expected progress in reading. Lesson observations and the work in pupils' books shows that in mathematics some of the most-able pupils are not set work which provides sufficient challenge and in some classes there are not enough opportunities for them to tackle longer and more complex pieces of writing.
- By the end of Key stage 2, the attainment of pupils of Bangladeshi heritage is around a year ahead of most other pupils in mathematics, two terms ahead in reading and about one term ahead in writing.
- Although most pupils with disabilities and special educational needs make expected progress, few make progress that is better than expected and so they do not catch up with their classmates.

### The early years provision

### requires improvement

- The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader is aware of differences in the progress and attainment of different groups of children but has not been successful in tackling these inequalities.
- The quality of teaching in Reception classes is not consistently good. Teachers plan activities which engage children's interest and hold their attention but the teaching of early reading skills, including phonics, is not always given enough priority.
- Teachers gather a range of evidence to make their assessments about children's stages of development when they start school but these assessments are sometimes inaccurate because adults do not recognise the knowledge and skills that children have already developed.
- Inspectors found that many children join the Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age in some areas. However, their communication, language, reading and writing skills are often less well developed.
- Children make reasonable progress so that at the end of Reception the proportion of children who are ready for Year 1 is close to the average nationally. Children's mathematical understanding is generally better developed than their reading ability.
- Fewer boys than girls reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception year. The attainment of children known to be eligible for support through pupil premium funding is lower than that of other children.
- Children who join the school with skills and knowledge which are below those typical, do not all make progress that is rapid enough for them to catch up with other children.
- Where learning is most successful, teachers and teaching assistants effectively model good communication and social skills. They are skilful in using questioning to encourage children, including those at the early stages of learning to speak English, to make choices and express opinions.
- Children settle quickly into the secure and caring environment because of the welcoming staff and warm relationships that are quickly established.

## 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>	103215
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	452174

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	826
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rosemary Tedds
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ruby Kundi
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 June 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 6750798
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