

Foxyards Primary School

Foxyards Road, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 8BH

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The leadership of special educational needs is ineffective. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not identified accurately. As a result, these pupils do not receive effective support and make poor progress in all subjects.
- School improvement planning is not fit for purpose. Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the school's weaknesses. They have not acted to address key issues, especially in teaching. This has led to a decline in pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders and teachers do not use the school's assessment systems accurately. They do not have a precise understanding of how well pupils are currently achieving. Expectations of what pupils should achieve and how they should behave are too low.
- Teaching does not meet pupils' needs. Teachers often provide work that is too hard or too easy. Consequently, pupils make poor progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Where teaching is weakest, pupils' learning is disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Pupils learn about a range of subjects through interesting topics. However, teachers do not develop pupils' skills and knowledge across the curriculum well enough over time.
- Children in the early years are happy and confident. However, staff do not do enough to develop children's writing skills or to check what they can do.
- Staff do not teach phonics accurately and reading books are not matched to pupils' abilities. This limits pupils' progress in reading.
- The teaching of handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation skills is particularly weak. Teachers do not address basic mistakes and pupils' writing skills do not improve over time.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics well enough, which limits their progress.
- Governors do not have an accurate view of pupils' outcomes and do not hold leaders to account for declining standards.
- Additional funding is not used effectively to help disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy coming to school, are well cared for and have positive relationships with staff.
- Staff ensure that pupils are kept as safe as possible and learn how to stay safe.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve rates of progress for all groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Urgently improve the leadership of special educational needs to ensure that the quality of teaching and additional support effectively meets the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - accurately evaluating the school's current performance
 - ensuring that school development priorities address key weaknesses and that actions are evaluated carefully to check they are improving pupils' outcomes
 - using assessment systems accurately to check on the progress of all groups of pupils
 - identifying weaknesses in teaching through robust monitoring procedures and providing effective support to improve the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics
 - making sure that additional funding is used effectively to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils with SEND
 - providing a curriculum that develops pupils' skills and knowledge across a range of subjects
 - ensuring that governors develop their understanding of pupils' outcomes and are able challenge leaders and hold them to account for the school's performance.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - raise their expectations and the level of challenge for all groups of pupils
 - accurately assess what pupils can already do and plan work that enables them to make progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to write at length
 - address basic mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - insist pupils present their work to the best of their ability and form letters accurately
 - plan more effective opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving and reasoning
 - provide work that maintains the pupils' interest, so as to improve their attitudes to learning and eradicate low-level disruption in lessons

- provide high-quality phonics teaching
 - match reading books to pupils’ abilities and phonics understanding
 - plan work that develops pupils’ subject-specific skills and knowledge across the curriculum.
- Improve the early years provision by ensuring that staff consistently:
- use effective assessment and questioning to support and develop children’s learning
 - provide children with sufficient time to express their own thoughts and ideas to show what they already know and can do before intervening in their learning
 - provide children with effective opportunities to develop their writing skills, including forming letters correctly.
- Improve behaviour by ensuring that staff have consistently high expectations of pupils’ behaviour, both in and outside the classroom.

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

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders do not have an accurate overview of the quality of education across the school. Their evaluation of the school's performance is overgenerous, and in some places is contradictory. Leaders' lack of oversight of, and their inaccuracy of judgements about, the quality of education mean that they have not identified and addressed the most pressing weaknesses. This has resulted in a significant decline in the school's performance since the last inspection.
- School improvement planning lacks clarity and does not identify precisely what actions are needed to address the key issues in the school. Where leaders have identified weaknesses, their actions to drive improvement have been implemented too slowly. Leaders cannot demonstrate that their actions have led to sustainable improvements across the school. In some cases, despite school improvement strategies being introduced, standards have declined further.
- Leaders' monitoring arrangements are weak. Their actions to improve teaching and learning over time have been unsuccessful. Leaders have not provided teachers with effective support to improve their skills. A wide range of initiatives have been introduced to develop teaching in reading, writing and mathematics. However, leaders do not ensure that teachers implement the initiatives consistently or effectively. As a result, they do not identify where additional support is needed to improve teaching and, therefore, pupils make poor progress.
- Leaders' development of assessment systems has been ineffective. New systems were introduced but leaders do not ensure that all teachers use them consistently to assess what pupils can do. Work in pupils' books does not match leaders' overview of how well pupils are achieving. Leaders' analysis of pupils' progress over time has not identified where pupils are falling significantly behind in their learning. In addition to this, leaders' expectations of what pupils should achieve by the end of key stage 2, based on their prior attainment, are too low. This means that leaders do not have an accurate understanding of current pupils' outcomes and underachievement remains unchallenged.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with SEND is poor. The needs of these pupils are not identified accurately, which means that teachers do not know how to plan for these pupils in class and what additional support they need to help them learn. As a result, pupils with SEND receive ineffective support within the class and, therefore, make weak progress in all subjects.
- There is no clear overview of the additional support that pupils with SEND receive outside the class, and whether that support is meeting their needs. Leaders do not check that the support provided by teaching assistants is helping pupils with SEND to make progress. Consequently, leaders do not know if the additional funding used to provide this support is being used effectively.
- Recently, leaders commissioned additional support from an external consultant to develop the provision for pupils with SEND. This support has identified the key areas that need to be improved, including making sure that the needs of pupils with SEND are accurately identified. However, this support is at an early stage of development. So

far, no improvements in these pupils' outcomes are evident.

- A review of the use of the pupil premium in 2017 identified a range of weaknesses relating to the leadership of, and support for, disadvantaged pupils. Leaders acted to address some of the issues, such as appointing a dedicated leader for the pupil premium. This leader has acted quickly to address key weaknesses. For example, teaching assistants have received training to ensure that the support they provide for disadvantaged pupils outside the classroom helps them to make progress.
- There is now a clear overview of what support disadvantaged pupils receive outside the classroom and their progress during these sessions is tracked carefully. However, there is no monitoring of whether this support is helping disadvantaged pupils to make better progress over time in the classroom. Leaders do not check that the additional funding used to support disadvantaged pupils is helping them to make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils underachieve significantly in these subjects.
- Leaders have endeavoured to develop an interesting and creative curriculum. They revised the curriculum to ensure that all national curriculum subjects are taught across the school, including opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Teachers plan a range of trips and enrichment activities to support the teaching of the topics covered, such as trips to the seaside and the zoo. However, leaders' and teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are too low. Leaders do not ensure that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed progressively across all subjects and do not monitor the effectiveness of teaching.
- The use of the physical education and sport premium is effective. The employment of a sports coach has enabled pupils to develop their sports skills well. Pupils have a range of opportunities to participate in sporting activities at lunchtime and after school to further develop their skills. Leaders also ensure that pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle is developed through the personal, social, health and economic curriculum. Pupils show a good awareness of the importance of physical activity and how to keep themselves healthy.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not understand that published outcomes from 2015 onward show that key groups of pupils at the end of key stage 2 have underachieved considerably in one or more of reading, writing and mathematics. In addition to this, governors do not have a clear or accurate overview of current pupils' outcomes. Governors do not hold leaders to account for pupils' poor outcomes.
- Governors do not check carefully enough whether leaders use the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND effectively. Governors know how the funding is used, but do not know if the actions leaders are taking are improving these pupils' outcomes. As a result, they do not challenge leaders about the current poor progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Governors accept leaders' views about the school's performance at face value. Their lack of effective challenge means that leaders have not been held to account for the decline in the school's performance.
- Governors ensure that safeguarding is effective and understand their statutory

responsibilities to safeguard pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all policies and procedures are fit for purpose and meet statutory requirements. Leaders regularly update staff with safeguarding training and check that all staff understand the training. Staff report any concerns they may have about pupils and leaders record and follow up these concerns quickly. Where necessary, leaders challenge external agencies to ensure that the right support is in place to keep pupils safe.
- Leaders go to great lengths to ensure that pupils are protected from radicalisation and extremism. For example, they ensured that the school participated in Home Office workshops to help educate pupils about the dangers of radicalisation and extremist views. In addition to this, leaders have worked closely with parents and carers to educate them about these issues within the local community and about the fact that racist language will not be tolerated. This work has helped to improve pupils' tolerance of, and respect for, all people regardless of their race or beliefs. Pupils are firm in their view that 'it is okay to be different'. This work helps to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Staff do not consistently teach phonics accurately. Their pronunciation of letter sounds is unclear, and sometimes incorrect. Pupils repeat these mistakes, which does not help them to develop a secure understanding of letter sounds. In addition to this, teachers do not match reading books to pupils' abilities well enough. Often, pupils' books are either too hard or too easy. This limits the progress pupils make in reading.
- Teachers have not received enough support to ensure that they teach writing effectively. There is considerable variation in the quality of teaching in writing. However, in all classes, teachers do not address basic mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling, so pupils demonstrate very little improvement in these skills over time. Teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop their writing skills in sustained pieces of writing. Pupils' handwriting is also exceptionally weak across the school. Many pupils do not form basic letters accurately, which restricts their progress in writing.
- Teachers give pupils opportunities to develop and embed their basic mathematical knowledge and skills. However, teachers do not move pupils forward in their learning quickly enough once they have shown that they have a secure understanding of a concept. Teachers regularly provide pupils with opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning activities, but these activities are not matched well enough to pupils' learning needs. Consequently, pupils' progress in mathematics is weak.
- Teachers do not have a detailed overview of the needs of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. This means that they are unable to plan for the needs of these groups of pupils in all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are not well

supported in class and, therefore, make limited progress.

- Teachers do not use the school's assessment systems accurately to identify what pupils can do. This does not enable them to plan effectively to help pupils make the progress they should. In addition to this, some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and they provide pupils with too much unnecessary support. This does not enable pupils to show what they are capable of and does not develop their skills and knowledge in a range of subjects.
- On some occasions, pupils become distracted in class and behave inappropriately. This is because teaching does not meet their needs and they are unable to participate in the lesson. This disrupts the learning of other pupils.
- Where teaching is stronger, teachers have higher expectations of pupils and plan work that is more closely matched to pupils' needs. Teachers adapt their teaching in response to what pupils show they can do so that their learning is taken forward effectively. This promotes stronger progress in learning. However, due to pupils' previous weak progress, this stronger teaching does not mean that pupils catch up with where they should be based on their different starting points.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils learn to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. Leaders have devised clear plans that teach pupils about various safeguarding situations across the school. In key stage 1, for example, pupils are taught about 'stranger danger' and sun and water safety. In key stage 2, pupils learn about how to cycle safely on the roads and about forming positive and safe friendships. In all year groups, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and not to disclose personal details. This effective work means that pupils show a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe in school, at home and when out in the community.
- Pupils understand what bullying is. They say that they trust adults in school and would go to them if they were worried about anything. Pupils are also confident that staff would deal with any concerns that they raise.
- There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils show care and respect towards one another. Leaders ensure that pupils in school are cared for and all staff are vigilant to any signs that pupils may be worried about something or unhappy. Where this occurs, staff are quick to provide support to address any concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Parents have mixed views about the standards of behaviour in school. Some parents are concerned that pupils' behaviour is not managed well enough. This inspection found that where teaching is weak, pupils' low-level disruption interferes with other pupils' learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are mixed and some pupils' commitment to work and learn is not strong because teachers' expectations of them are too low.

Outside the classroom, pupils' behaviour is usually calm and orderly. Pupils engage in positive activities during playtimes and enjoy socialising with their friends.

- The school promotes a positive approach to behaviour, where teachers and leaders reward positive behaviour and encourage all pupils to be good role models. However, the impact of these rewards systems is unclear because leaders' analysis of behaviour patterns is not developed sufficiently.
- Leaders work hard to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. For example, they hold family workshops about attendance and follow up any pupil absences swiftly. Leaders also make home visits, where needed, to check pupils are safe when not in school. As a result, attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Leaders' analysis of current pupils' attainment is unclear. The figures presented to inspectors did not provide an accurate overview of pupils' current attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in current pupils' books shows that standards are low, especially in writing.
- Currently, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are making poor progress. This is because teachers do not know what specific support they need to help them learn effectively in the classroom.
- In 2018, at the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly below national figures. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in mathematics has been significantly below the national average for the past two years. Pupils whose prior attainment was in line with age-related expectations when they were in key stage 1 have made very weak progress across key stage 2. Their progress rates in reading and mathematics in 2017 and 2018 were significantly below national figures.
- Pupils' attainment at the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was below average. The proportions of pupils with attainment at greater depth in writing, and at a higher standard in reading and mathematics, were also below national averages.
- In 2018, the proportions of pupils with attainment at the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with the national averages. The proportion of pupils with attainment at greater depth was in line with the national average in reading but just below national averages in writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check has been in line with national average for the past four years.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in the early years is variable. Some staff are highly skilled at promoting learning in all areas of the curriculum. They allow children to show what they can do, assess their achievements quickly, and then intervene expertly to move their learning forward at a good pace. Activities are well matched to children's

interests. This helps children to remain focused on their learning for sustained periods of time. Children working with these adults make good progress in their learning.

- However, some staff provide children with too much unnecessary support and over-direct them. They do not make careful observations to assess what children can do and, instead, do too much for them. This restricts their learning and progress.
- In writing, staff in the Reception class do not provide children with effective opportunities to practise and develop their writing. Activities do not support children's learning needs well enough and staff do not address poor letter formation.
- Children and staff in the early years have very positive relationships. Children appear happy and confident and are keen to share their learning. Staff ensure that children are well looked after.
- Most children enter the Nursery Year with skills and abilities below those typically seen for their age. Highly effective teaching enables them to make strong progress, so they achieve well. The Nursery team's clear focus on developing communication and language is particularly effective. As a result, children are well prepared for the Reception Year.
- Children join the Reception class from other nurseries, as well as the school's nursery. Therefore, overall, children's skills and abilities at the start of the Reception class are just below those typical for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was broadly in line with the national average in 2017. However, the proportion of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development has been below the national average for three years. However, most children are well prepared for their move to key stage 1.
- The early years is well led. The leader has a clear overview of strengths and areas for development and is taking effective action to develop the quality of teaching across the early years. For example, staff have opportunities to learn from one another and from early years practitioners in other schools. The leader also monitors the quality of teaching regularly, providing bespoke support where needed. All staff work closely together to develop consistent approaches to planning and assessment. The leader has an accurate understanding of current children's outcomes and the quality of the provision. She uses this information to plan further improvements across the early years.
- Staff engage with parents to help them understand how to support their children's learning at home. For example, parents were invited to a mathematics workshop and came into school to share their children's learning about the Chinese New Year. Termly newsletters also inform parents about their children's learning. Such opportunities and information have improved parental engagement with the school.
- All staff ensure that children are well prepared to join the Nursery and Reception Years through effective transition arrangements, including making sure that children and parents have opportunities to visit the school prior to starting. Staff work effectively with a range of agencies to support children's additional needs where necessary. Safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	103788
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10058531

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	354
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr James Betjemann
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Thomas
Telephone number	01384 818740
Website	www.foxyards.dudley.sch.uk
Email address	data@foxyards.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 October 2014

Information about this school

- Foxyards Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The school uses an external consultant to support the teaching and leadership of special educational needs.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met with pupils, heard a selection of pupils read and observed pupils in the breakfast club and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the leader responsible for the pupil premium, those responsible for special educational needs and the early years leader. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of pupils' books from all year groups and from a range of subjects were reviewed. Reviews of some of the pupils' books were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Several documents were considered, including reports to governors reviewing the school's performance, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans and information about the monitoring of teaching processes. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' progress, the use of additional funding, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to Parent View and the 26 free-text responses from parents received during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke to parents before the start of the school day. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire. Inspectors reviewed the 12 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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