

Highlees Community Primary School

Ashton Road, Westwood, Peterborough, PE3 7ER

Inspection dates 11–12 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are inadequate. Too much weak teaching means that pupils are not acquiring skills in these subjects as quickly as they should.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. In too many lessons, pupils' needs are not met well enough and those pupils who require extra help receive only limited support from teaching assistants.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement when tasks are not closely matched to their abilities and they lose interest in lessons.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. Checks on the performance of leaders and staff have not resulted in higher standards or led to improvements in teaching and learning quickly enough.
- The role of recently appointed middle leaders in evaluating teaching and learning has not been sufficiently developed. Consequently, weaknesses in teaching, including for pupils who speak English as an additional language, are slowing pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and leadership team have begun to galvanise support from staff and governors and they are working with a fresh determination to bring about improvement.
- The behaviour of pupils around school is often exemplary. In lessons where teaching is effective, pupils are keen to learn and work hard. Behaviour is improving.
- The Pupil Premium is being used to accelerate progress successfully and is raising standards in literacy and numeracy for the more disadvantaged pupils.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception because provision is managed well and teaching is usually good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons of which four were joint observations involving the headteacher and both deputy headteachers. Inspectors observed senior leaders reporting back to teachers on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement seen in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the pupil council and a group of Key Stage 2 pupils, the chair of the governing body and two other governors, the headteacher and other leaders.
- A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority about the support and advice provided for the school.
- There were 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. The inspectors also sought the views of several parents and carers who they met on the school site.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents including: the school's own data on pupils' recent and current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and safeguarding records.

Inspection team

Joseph Peacock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Judith Payne	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Davis	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 and the numbers have increased significantly this year with 57 new pupils being admitted. Most of these pupils speak English as an additional language and most are in the Key Stage 1 classes. Many pupils join or leave the school during the year.
- There are two classes in each year group from Reception to Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds is high, making up almost half of all pupils. Just over one-third of these pupils speak English as an additional language. In all, 28 different languages are represented in the school.
- Half of all pupils attending the school are eligible for the Pupil Premium (this is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and/or in local authority care). This figure is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through School Action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been many staffing changes over the past two years, including 12 new teachers, five different headteachers and a new deputy headteacher. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2012 after a period as associate headteacher.
- Links with a local outstanding school ended in May 2012. In September 2012, a new shadow governing body started to take over from the interim executive board. This transition period is due to end in December 2012.
- Westwood and Ravensthorpe Children's Centre and the Young Generation pre-school are based on the site and are inspected separately. Building work is in progress to improve the accommodation used by these settings.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching and learning consistently good in lessons by:
 - improving the way teachers plan work so that it is set at the right level for all groups of pupils
 - improving the quality of support provided by teaching assistants so that they contribute to pupils' learning in and out of the classroom effectively
 - making sure that pupils who speak English as an additional language receive the support they need so they make at least good progress.
- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - ensuring that pupils are taught to read effectively

- providing pupils with more opportunities to write in their exercise books in English and other subjects rather than using individual white boards and worksheets
 - ensuring that the teaching of basic number skills, especially in Key Stage 1, is done effectively.
- Ensure that leadership and management are effective in driving improvement by:
- requiring leaders at all levels, including the governing body, to focus rigorously on tackling the key priorities identified in the school improvement plan and then checking the impact of their work to ensure pupils make much faster progress
 - making sure that subject leaders, and the new progress and attainment leaders, focus on improving teaching and accelerating pupils' progress, particularly for those pupils who speak English as an additional language
 - making sure that governors set challenging targets for teachers and leaders so that they are held fully to account for their performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate in Key Stages 1 and 2 mainly because weaknesses in the quality of teaching have not been eliminated. In Key Stage 1, the school is failing to meet the needs of an increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, resulting in low overall attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of these pupils has declined considerably since the last inspection. The amount of specialist teaching they receive is not proving to be adequate for them to learn English quickly enough.
- By the end of Year 6, overall standards remain below average in English and mathematics. Relatively few pupils achieve higher than expected standards although this proportion is increasing slowly. Pupils who start at the school in the Reception class and stay until the end of Year 6 make significantly better progress than pupils who join the school at other times.
- Pupils do not make consistent progress from year to year because in some year groups teaching is inadequate. In some mathematics lessons, for example, teachers do not plan sufficiently demanding work.
- Children in the Reception classes are effectively taught early reading skills every day in sessions where they learn letters and their sounds (phonics). Learning support assistants provide effective help so that Reception children develop their speaking and listening skills well.
- The reading skills that children acquire in the Reception classes are not being built upon. Pupils are not taught to read or write well enough in other parts of the school. This means that older pupils often struggle with their work because their reading skills are weak. A range of effective measures for Year 6 pupils, such as one-to-one support, is resourced by additional funding for pupils supported by the Pupil Premium funding. As a result, almost all of these pupils make good progress with some improving rapidly in Year 6.
- The Pupil Premium funding is starting to have a positive effect on the achievement of eligible pupils. For example, breakfast booster classes, one-to-one tuition and 'Easter school' are all helping to close the gap in attainment between these pupils and their classmates.
- When children enter the Reception classes, their knowledge and skills are typically well below those expected for pupils of this age. A large proportion speak English as an additional language. Well-managed provision and good teaching ensure that children settle quickly and have a good start to school. Exciting and interesting activities that extend children's knowledge, skills and understanding of the world around them, such as playing with bubbles and making sandwiches, are supported effectively by teachers or other adults.
- Outdoor learning for Reception children is enjoyable with a good range of independent activities and games, such as hopscotch, are used to promote their counting skills. As a result, most children make good progress in all areas of learning. However, because of their low starting points, many do not attain the early reading, writing and numeracy skills expected of them by the time they enter Year 1.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Action taken by the headteacher, senior staff and governing body to improve teaching has only had limited success. Learning in one-third of the lessons observed during the inspection required improvement or was inadequate because tasks were either too easy or too difficult

for the pupils.

- The support provided by teaching assistants in the classroom, or when teaching groups in other areas, varies in quality with some being inadequate. When pupils are not sufficiently challenged by teachers or given the right level of support from teaching assistants, the management of their behaviour becomes more difficult as they lose interest in learning.
- In a few lessons, introductions to the whole class are too long and not appropriate for all ability groups. Some pupils at the early stages of learning English find it particularly difficult to understand what is expected of them. As a result, these and other pupils are not developing their reading, writing and mathematics skills quickly enough.
- In lessons where teaching is more effective, teachers use assessment information carefully to plan appropriate tasks for all groups of pupils. In these lessons, teachers expect more of the pupils who respond much better as they enjoy doing more challenging tasks. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed solving difficult number puzzles or real-life problems involving money.
- Teachers' marking is usually thorough and detailed; comments show clearly how pupils can improve their work and there are some examples of pupils responding to them. The improved quality of marking is helping to raise standards but this is not consistent in all classes, reflecting weaknesses that still exist in the quality of teaching.
- Teachers often work effectively during lessons to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They make good use of pupils working collaboratively in pairs to discuss new learning, and topic work about other countries and religions raises pupils' awareness and understanding of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.
- Pupils are currently not being prepared well enough for the next phase in their education. This is because too few are achieving the standards expected in literacy and numeracy.
- All parents met during the inspection appreciated the good relationships between staff and their children.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Inconsistent teaching and low expectations affect pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils' behaviour requires improvement, particularly in lessons where teaching is inadequate as some pupils lose their concentration, especially when tasks are not sufficiently engaging to hold their interest. Pupils say that they feel safe and enjoy coming to school. 'Behaviour is much better since the new headteacher arrived' is a commonly held view of pupils and their parents, reflecting more ambitious expectations by leaders.
- There have been no permanent and few fixed-term exclusions under the leadership of the new headteacher reflecting improved behaviour management. Pupils are polite and show respect to one another and staff around school. Behaviour is good in the well-organised breakfast club.
- The school has ensured that pupils of all ages have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including racist comments and name calling. All those spoken to say that bullying in any form rarely happens and pupils, parents and carers are confident that adults will communicate any concerns when dealing with any such incidents

- Any cases of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively. Pupils are confident that the staff will look after them if they have any concerns. Parents spoken to during the inspection agreed that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved and that it deals effectively with bullying.
- Attendance is broadly average and improving. The headteacher and staff have worked hard and with some success to increase attendance and reduce persistent absences.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leadership and management have not done enough to improve teaching. As a result, too many pupils are underachieving. The school is failing to give pupils an acceptable standard of education or prepare them adequately for the next stage in their education.
- However, the new headteacher knows where the weaknesses in teaching are and has made the setting of targets for teachers and leaders more rigorous. Up to now, a lack of rigorous performance management linked to carefully targeted professional training and development has contributed to the weaknesses in teaching persisting over time.
- The newly formed leadership team is getting to grips with improving the school, but it is very early days. Both deputy headteachers share the headteacher's vision and are beginning to help improve teaching by checking on its quality, although they are only just starting out in their new roles.
- Positive responses from the staff questionnaire reveal that staff are committed to improving the school. Their involvement in checking one another's and pupils' performance each term shows their determination to support senior leaders.
- The learning opportunities provided for pupils do not result in them making enough progress in literacy and numeracy. This applies particularly to those pupils who speak English as an additional language. There is a good range of after-school clubs for pupils to enjoy and these contribute well to pupils' achievement and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The support and advice provided by the local authority is resulting in more lessons where teaching is effective and some pupils are achieving higher standards in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, there is still some way to go to eliminate all inadequate teaching.
- The school works well with parents and carers and the small number who responded to Parent View were positive about the school. Most agreed that pupils are happy and said they would recommend the school to others.
- **The governance of the school:**
Governance is improving. There is a wealth and breadth of relevant expertise amongst governors, many of whom are working alongside members of the interim executive board. Their collective expertise as interim governors is helping the school to begin to improve; for example, the school's budget is now managed more effectively than in the past. All governors are developing their role in helping to evaluate the school's effectiveness and are beginning to hold leaders to account through asking searching questions. They measure teachers' performance against national guidelines when setting pay levels and overseeing salary progression for the headteacher and teachers. The leadership team and governors ensure that all statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.

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	110768
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	401150

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Elaine Hedgecock
Headteacher	Emma Ward
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2009
Telephone number	01733 264294
Fax number	01733 264283
Email address	office@highlees.peterborough.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

