

Howard Park Community School

St Peg Lane, Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire, BD19 3SD

Inspection dates 7–8 July 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' achievement over time has not been high enough, especially but not exclusively in writing. The quality of teaching and how much progress pupils make vary too much from class to class.
- Pupils' progress, particularly in writing, is not yet good. Not enough pupils make good progress.
- Expectations of pupils' writing have not been high enough. Teachers do not always correct pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling errors.
- Teaching does not consistently challenge pupils, particularly the most able, to reach their full potential.
- Marking does not always let pupils know how well they can improve their work.
- Teachers do not expect their pupils to write sufficiently at length. Not all teachers insist that pupils present their written work well.
- Teachers generally use questions to check basic understanding, rather than help pupils to build deeper understanding and learn more quickly.
- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not ensured teaching and achievement are good enough.
- The skills of subject leaders to check on pupils' learning are not yet fully developed.
- Governors do not provide rigorous challenge about the effectiveness of the school. They do not hold leaders to account for ensuring all pupils make good progress with their work.

The school has the following strengths

- Provision in the early years is effective. As a result, children make good progress and most achieve a good level of development.
- The school is moving in the right direction under the leadership of the headteacher. The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are showing signs of improvement.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good and often exemplary. As a result, this group of pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good. This is contributing to better achievement in reading.
- Pupils like coming to school. Attendance is good.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, for example when using the internet.
- Excellent relationships exist between pupils and their teachers and teaching assistants. These underpin pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or part lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and observations of pupils’ work. Inspectors listened to Year 1 and Year 2 pupils read.
- Meetings were held with groups of Year 5 pupils, members of the governing body including the Chair of Governors, senior leaders and middle leaders. A representative from the local authority was spoken to twice by telephone.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents, including those concerned with pupils’ current achievement and progress, development plans and information about teachers’ performance. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. The minutes of the governing body were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work in lessons and at samples of work in English, mathematics and other subjects in their exercise books.
- Inspectors considered the 22 responses by parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. They also considered the school’s own questionnaire sent to all parents this academic year.
- Inspectors considered the 32 responses to the staff questionnaire and looked at the school’s website.

Inspection team

Michael Wintle, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Fiona Dixon	Additional inspector
Barbara Martin	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Howard Park Community School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in Nursery attend part time. Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average. The school has significant numbers of pupils with an educational statement.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is higher than found in most schools. This is additional funding that schools receive to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, is lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2, so that more teaching is good or better, by:
 - using questioning in lessons to help deepen and accelerate learning as well as to check pupils' understanding
 - strengthening the quality of feedback given to pupils so that they know how well they are learning and understand more clearly how to improve their work.
- Speed up pupils' progress, especially in writing, by:
 - setting challenging work for all pupils and especially the most able
 - expecting pupils to write at length more frequently to further develop their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - placing more importance on high standards of presentation of pupils' work.
- Further develop the skills of leaders by ensuring that:
 - there is a greater rigour for leaders and governors in checking that learning is good for all pupils in all subjects
 - subject leaders play a leading role in driving improvements in teaching and learning and raising pupils' achievement
 - ensuring that governors gain the skills they need to challenge and support the school in its bid to improve.

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

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- The leadership and management of the school require improvement because leaders have not ensured that teaching and achievement over time are consistently good. Recent improvements in pupils' reading and in the teaching of mathematics indicate that the school has the capacity to improve further.
- Not all key subject leaders and governors have sufficiently detailed understanding of the school's performance data nor do they analyse the impact of actions with enough rigour. They have not always been active in driving the necessary improvements.
- The headteacher promotes a positive ethos. Improvements in leadership and provision in early years, the removal of weaker teachers and, currently, better teaching have secured more rapid progress by pupils, especially in reading and mathematics. However, this improvement is not fully established.
- The curriculum provides for learning in a full range of subjects and, in the best lessons, encourages enthusiasm for learning. Trips out of school help pupils enjoy their work. Pupils spoke excitedly about visiting a local theatre and learning about the Romans. However, additional support for writing is not making much difference because pupils do not always have the opportunities to write at length in order to develop their spelling, presentation and punctuation skills further.
- Senior leaders and governors have allocated the pupil premium very effectively to support disadvantaged pupils, for example by employing additional staff. Extra activities to support disadvantaged pupils including small group teaching and one-to-one interventions are helping to improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress.
- The promotion of equal opportunities is good. The school offers all pupils support of good quality and equal access to a stimulating curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils' behaviour is good and that discrimination is not tolerated. The strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development promotes good relationships.
- Learning about British values and democracy is very well promoted through the school council's work. There are opportunities to understand the rule of law and individual liberty. During the recent election, pupils had been encouraged to take part in a 'take over' day and had organised the work of the school for that day.
- Leaders have ensured that extra sports funding is used well to promote a healthy lifestyle for all pupils and to equip teachers with the skills they need to teach a wider variety of sport, and especially gymnastics and team games. The school has been especially active in establishing games like 'goal ball', which has had a good impact on all pupils and especially those who have special educational needs. There has been an increase in pupils taking part in competitive sport and the headteacher believes the impact has been good: 'We've started to win some matches.' In 2014, the school was successful in winning the Spen football and netball leagues.
- The school meets the statutory requirements for the safeguarding of pupils. The leadership and management of safeguarding are strengths of the school. This results in pupils feeling very happy and safe, and developing good relationships with one another and adults in the school.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school, its areas of strength and where it needs to develop further. It has provided effective support in appointing a new headteacher for September 2015, evaluating the school's performance and identifying areas to develop.
- Comments gathered during the inspection and the results of the parent questionnaire demonstrate that parents are highly satisfied with the school. They recognise the drive towards improvement and the strong emphasis on pupils' reading achievement.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body takes its role seriously. Governors want to help standards to rise and progress to quicken in writing. They know a lot about the school because the headteacher gives them detailed information, including the impact of the pupil premium on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. The governors are very visible in school and regularly help pupils with their learning, for example working weekly in Year 1. They are aware that staff have targets as part of the performance management processes.
- Governors have received training from the local authority on the school's performance and the progress and the standards pupils reach. However, they do not delve deeply enough into the achievement of pupils and different groups of pupils, such as the most able. An external review of governance is intended to assist them in having an accurate understanding of how they can be more effective in questioning and challenging leaders about the school's work.

- The governors ensure that the statutory duties, such as safeguarding requirements, are met and that the school's financial resources are well managed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Inspectors agree with staff, parents and pupils that teachers model respect and courtesy effectively and that pupils reflect this in their behaviour. The school is characterised by an ethos of mutual respect.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and are well motivated. They listen attentively and work independently and in groups effectively. Because of this lessons proceed smoothly without interruptions to learning.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered around school. They are aware of the school's rules and say that rewards and sanctions are fair and applied consistently. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their attendance, which is above the national average.
- Pupils say that almost all behaviour is good. They acknowledge that a very small number of pupils find it difficult to maintain high expectations set by school leaders. However, they say that all staff support these pupils to understand the consequences of their behaviour and this leads to them making better choices.
- The school keeps detailed records of incidents of poor behaviour and responds to them in a thorough and well-considered manner. The school provides good support to pupils who have emotional and social difficulties, helping them to manage their own behaviour.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Rigorous policies and procedures are in place to keep pupils safe and these are regularly updated.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and their parents agree. They have a good knowledge of different forms of bullying. Pupils said they know what to do if they are bullied and are very confident teachers would deal with it quickly.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils know how to stay safe and protect themselves from harm. Pupils spoke confidently about keeping themselves safe on the internet and could explain, for example, why having strong passwords was keeping them safe.
- Pupils appreciate and enjoy the breakfast club and after-school clubs because they feel safe and can meet their friends.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. Consequently, pupils do not always make as much progress as they could. This has held back attainment, which in 2014 was broadly average for reading and mathematics, and well below average for writing.
- In some classes, pupils are challenged by the tasks and questions that teachers set. However, this is not done consistently well across the school. Teachers do not always ensure that activities make pupils think hard enough and, as a result, they do not make as much progress as they could and especially in their writing. Sometimes teachers' questions are mainly used to check basic understanding of the ideas being taught rather than helping pupils to think more deeply about ideas and to learn more quickly.
- Pupils' progress is currently improving in writing, but not as quickly as in reading and mathematics. This is because teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to apply their skills to extended pieces of writing.
- In writing, not all teachers insist on good spelling habits, neat handwriting and good presentation and layout. As a result, these aspects of writing vary too much.
- Reading is well taught. In many Key Stage 1 lessons, pupils demonstrated a good prior knowledge of the phonics (the sounds that letters make) they had been taught. Pupils in Year 2 read words such as 'invisible,' 'whisper' and 'excellent' with ease. When pupils read to inspectors, they used their knowledge competently to tackle tricky words.
- Pupils' progress is improving in mathematics because teachers focus on making sure that pupils understand key ideas, use correct mathematical terms and build their confidence in tackling 'real-life' problems. In an upper Key Stage 2 class learning about using their skills to solve problems, pupils were

using the story of the *Pied Piper of Hamelin* to establish formulae for equations. Pupils' learning was fast and all were very engaged in linking the story to their mathematical knowledge.

- The most-able pupils are not challenged well in some classes. Consequently, they do not make the rapid gains they are capable of to achieve their very best.
- The headteacher and her senior leaders have introduced good systems for marking pupils' work. Teachers are working hard to follow the guidance and to mark in line with the school's policy. However, there are differences between classes in the extent to which pupils are expected to respond to their teacher's suggested guidance about how to improve. As a consequence, this slows the rate at which some pupils learn.
- Teaching assistants and other adults are skilled and support children in their learning well. When teachers deploy them appropriately, they give particularly strong support for pupils' learning and especially with reading. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are often catered for well.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Over time, pupils have not made the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case in writing.
- The attainment of Year 1 pupils in the national phonics screening check in 2014 was below the national average. Because of strong action by the headteacher and leaders within the school, more pupils are on track to reach the expected standard. Letters and sounds are now reinforced effectively. Current pupils make good use of their understanding of phonics to help them read and spell unfamiliar words.
- In 2014 national tests, Year 6 pupils' results improved to be broadly in line with national averages in reading and above in mathematics. However, pupils did significantly less well than their peers nationally in writing.
- The percentage of pupils who made progress expected by the end of Year 6 was similar to the national averages in reading and below in mathematics. The percentage of pupils that made more than expected of them was well below the national average in writing. However, the school's most recent assessments, which arrived in school on the first day of inspection, show pupils' progress is rapidly improving in all subjects, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make better progress than their peers and they achieve well in lessons. This is because they receive prompt and effective support to help them keep up with their peers. Current pupils are working hard and their progress continues to be good.
- Published data for 2014 show that disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 made similar and sometimes better progress than their peers. Results for eligible pupils show they were a term ahead of other pupils in the school in reading and broadly average for writing. In mathematics, they were two terms behind other pupils in the school, but above similar pupils nationally.
- The progress of the most-able pupils in school, although improving, still varies too much between subjects and classes. Recent improvements in teaching are addressing the underperformance of this group, but teachers are not yet consistently providing demanding work for these pupils in classes.

The early years provision is good

- Much improved teaching, effective experienced leadership and skilled adult support have ensured that the early years outcomes have improved. This is especially the case in the communication and language the children acquire and in their literacy and number skills.
- Leadership in early years is good. The leader of early years is energetic and sets a strong example for other teachers and staff. Staff know individual children well. Their detailed checks and observations provide accurate information about children's progress.
- Children join the early years with skills below those typical for their age. Children make good progress in the early years so that, by the end of the Reception Year, they are well prepared for Year 1. The proportion of children that reach a good level of development is rising. Last year, the proportion was lower than the national figure. The school leaders acted quickly to improve the children's skill levels by providing more challenging activities and improving the provision. As a result, the school's evidence indicates that the proportion reaching a good level of development is on track to be higher than last year's national figure.
- Children learn in an emotionally and physically safe environment, where staff model a confident, caring

and cheerful approach to learning. As a result, all children play very well together and have formed good relationships with their friends and adults. Children behave very well. They use the resources carefully and were very keen to show inspectors the 'Bug House' found in the outdoor area.

- Children are safe and well looked after. Good links are established with parents, who are encouraged to have a positive involvement with their child's learning.

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	107671
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	461862

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gordon Muir
Headteacher	Karen Vickers
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2010
Telephone number	01274 335262
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