

East Crompton St James CofE Primary School

St James Street, Shaw, Oldham, Lancashire OL2 7TD

Inspection dates 5 and 8 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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' achievement is inadequate and the school's performance has declined significantly since its last inspection.
- School leaders and governors are not taking effective steps to secure teaching that is good or better for all groups of pupils, particularly in English.
- Teachers' low expectations of what pupils can achieve mean teaching is not matched to pupils' needs; consequently, limited progress is made in lessons.
- The impact of recent steps to improve the teaching of writing has been too slow to come through and improve pupils' progress.
- Governors do not have the necessary skills to challenge the leaders of the school to make improvements in teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not fully meet statutory requirements.

The school has the following strengths

- The relationships between pupils and teachers are strong. Pupils make friends easily and are respectful and show good manners at lunchtime and during breaks.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in developing communication skills and play together well.
- Standards in reading are above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two days. The second day of inspection occurred after two days' delay due to severe weather conditions.
- The inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by eight of the nine teachers.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, pupils, teachers with responsibility for English and mathematics, the special needs coordinator and the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator. Inspectors also met with representatives of the governing body and local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including information about pupils' attainment and progress, policies and procedures for safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation report and school-development plan, and reports from a school improvement consultant.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books in a wide range of subjects and heard small groups of pupils reading.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents including 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Rebecca Lawton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Margot D'Arcy

Additional Inspector

Michael Cooper

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 an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding, (additional government funding for supporting pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces) is below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils who are supported at school action and at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, are below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupil's attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 so that it is good or better by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have high expectations of their pupils and what they can achieve in lessons
 - take proper account of pupils' abilities and what pupils already know, understand and can do when planning lessons
 - set work that is at the right level and challenges everyone
 - give pupils more opportunities to actively participate in lessons so that they share and develop their ideas fully
 - make what is taught sufficiently interesting to stimulate pupils' interest and maintain their attention.
- Improve achievement by challenging and supporting all pupils appropriately by:
 - providing more engaging and creative opportunities for pupils to write, particularly at length
 - improving how well pupils with special educational needs are taught, setting suitably challenging work and checking progress regularly.
- Urgently address weaknesses in safeguarding procedures by ensuring:
 - the safeguarding policy and its related policies are regularly reviewed and updated
 - new staff receive safeguarding training promptly
 - all risk assessments are complete and routinely updated
 - any records of incidents relating to pupils' safety and well-being are recorded clearly and updated where necessary.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in securing improvement by:

- making sure all subject leaders plan for and evaluate their subjects fully
- ensuring that the school's leaders monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching thoroughly and identify the steps that need to be taken to lead to improvement
- implementing a rigorous programme to manage the performance of teachers
- ensuring that leaders evaluate the school's performance accurately and draw up plans of subsequent action that are sharply focused on areas of weakness
- improving the governing body's skills and knowledge so they can hold school leaders to account and provide robust challenge when evaluating the school's work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Over time, pupils are not making the progress that they are capable of in English, particularly in writing. Girls and more-able pupils and are underachieving in English by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils' overall achievement is inadequate.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is usually above average in mathematics. However, current attainment is too variable across year groups and for different groups of pupils, as shown by the quality of learning seen in lessons and pupils' books during the inspection.
- As a result of weak teaching across Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are too reliant on the teacher to improve their understanding and are unsure how to develop their own learning. Many lessons fail to inspire pupils, and because of this many pupils do not work to the best of their ability which in turn limits their progress.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 varies too much across year groups. The curriculum in this key stage is not always well matched to pupils' learning needs. Also, in some lessons, pupils sit listening for too long rather than actively learning and this slows their progress.
- In Key Stage 2, weaknesses in teachers' planning mean that lessons do not stretch and challenge pupils appropriately because tasks are too easy for some pupils and too hard for others.
- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in English. The curriculum in English is highly focused on developing skills such as grammar and punctuation and often does not interest or excite pupils. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write creatively and at length.
- The progress of the small number of pupils with special educational needs is not checked closely enough. Consequently, work is not set at the appropriate level to enable the pupils to succeed and some of them make no progress.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and receive additional support through pupil premium funding do not achieve as well as other pupils in the school or similar pupils nationally as shown in their average points scores in national tests. The school does not monitor or evaluate the use of pupil premium funding closely enough to judge the impact it is having on the progress of these pupils.
- Children start school with skills that are broadly typical for their age. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong, and the children have access to good resources. As a result they make good progress and leave the Reception class with skills and knowledge slightly above the level expected for their age.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 read well and often, and have skills in reading better than national averages by the end of Key Stage 1. They report that they enjoy reading and have access to a good range of books. Standards in reading in Key Stage 2 are above average.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- As a result of inadequate teaching over time, pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils know, understand and can do are too low and they do not

set work that is at the right level to challenge all pupils. Too often pupils sit quietly for long periods while teachers explain tasks that are easy to complete. Work in books shows that all pupils are regularly doing the same tasks regardless of their ability.

- In the past, teachers have been unable to plan for appropriately high levels of challenge as the school's assessment of pupils' achievement has been inaccurate. This has recently been tackled through the use of external support to make sure pupils' performance is assessed accurately. For example, in English, teachers are now evaluating several pieces of work together as a portfolio to award an overall level instead of relying upon a single piece of writing.
- Lessons lack an organised start and end, and there is little time for reflection or questions from pupils. Too often lessons come to an abrupt halt for break or lunch and pupils are unable to review what they have learned.
- Too few teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons. Pupils are not asked questions frequently enough to encourage any exploration or to extend their understanding of the topic they are studying.
- Tasks that pupils are given are often simple and do not require them to think hard. The tasks restrict the scope for the more able to move on quickly, and do not support the less able to deepen their understanding. Teachers rely on worksheets in too many subjects, rather than allowing pupils to discuss and create their own responses to a topic.
- Marking is too variable across year groups, and in some cases teachers' comments do not help pupils to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn from and correct their mistakes.
- In the very small amount of good teaching seen during the inspection, teachers used interesting and challenging topics to motivate pupils to make personal responses. Pupils were able to discuss and ask questions before completing different tasks that matched their ability levels. Pupils were supported to make creative responses to the topic and to share these and refine their answers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning require improvement. There is low-level disruption in some lessons particularly when work is not well matched to pupils' abilities or interests.
- Pupils are not encouraged frequently enough to share ideas and are not given time to think or discuss their answers with one another before responding. Consequently, apart from in the Reception class, pupils say little and are reluctant to speak up unless it is to answer single-word or factual questions following the teachers request for 'hands up'.
- Not enough time is given to developing independent research or investigative skills so that pupils can improve their understanding and achieve well. For example, lower-ability pupils rely heavily on the teacher for support. They choose to wait for the teacher to come to their desk to answer a question or explain a task rather than attempt tasks on their own.
- More-able pupils often complete tasks early and choose to read or sit quietly waiting for the others to finish, rather than doing more challenging work. In some classes the pupils use this extra time to make comments that disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils' manners and conduct around school are good. They share well, have good relationships with all staff and each other and play together well. They say they feel safe around school and know how to stay safe online.
- Pupils know about different kinds of bullying and have confidence that teachers will be able to help them to stop it. They are aware of e-safety, but have limited knowledge about homophobic bullying. The bullying policy does not specifically cover information about this for pupils or staff.
- At lunchtime, the conduct of pupils is very good, helped by the presence of the headteacher and lunch time assistants. The children follow well-established procedures and routines without fuss.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Leaders and managers have not been effective in ensuring pupils make adequate progress, particularly in English. Leaders have been too slow to address pupils' weaker attainment in writing.
- Leaders' desire for improvement and the identification of weaknesses have not been matched with appropriate actions or rigorous review in relation to improving pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and safeguarding.
- The school's systems for safeguarding are inadequate and require immediate improvement. Statutory requirements are not fully met in a number of areas. For example, policies are not reviewed and updated appropriately, risk assessments are not routinely completed, safeguarding training for new staff has been delayed and records of important incidents relating to pupils' safety and well-being are not kept up-to-date.
- The school's assessment of its own performance is inaccurate and does not include appropriate evidence to support the evaluations made. Systems to collect information about pupils' performance are limited, and there is no evaluation and analysis of the progress that different groups of pupils make.
- The school development plan lacks clear, measurable outcomes in many cases which makes it difficult to judge whether planned actions are successful. Subject coordinators have too little involvement in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of their subjects and they have only just begun to observe the quality of teaching.
- Systems to manage the performance of staff, analyse pupils' work and make decisions about staffing arrangements and salary progression are not robust enough. For example, observations of teaching, mainly by the headteacher, do not evaluate the quality of teaching clearly or show how it can be improved.
- Leaders and managers do not evaluate the impact of the extra help and monies that are allocated to support pupils who are falling behind or are disadvantaged. For example, school leaders and governors do not know whether pupil premium funding is having a positive impact on raising achievement or not.
- The local authority's evaluation of the school is overgenerous and is based on information which is out of date. This overgenerous assessment led to the local authority providing only light-touch support for the school. A school improvement consultant's report highlighting weaknesses in achievement and leadership has not informed support for the school quickly enough.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is not effective in holding the school to account for the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching. It has focused too much on pupils' behaviour and improving the school environment. Governors are too reliant on the headteacher and an external consultant to inform them about the management of teachers' performance and how well pupils are achieving. School policies are not reviewed or approved quickly enough and some do not meet statutory requirements. The governing body is unaware of the school's non-compliance with regulations regarding safeguarding or safer recruitment. Monitoring of finances and premises is more robust. Governors are aware of the areas where pupil-premium funding has been spent in the previous year but not in detail. Parents are not told what difference this funding is making because the evaluation of its impact on accelerating pupils' progress is weak.

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	105710
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	402987

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Lomas
Headteacher	Maureen Barnett
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2007
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