

Banners Gate Primary School

Copice View Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B73 6UE

Inspection dates

19–20 June 2018

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 headteacher and governing body have not maintained a good standard of education since the previous inspection. Frequent changes to leadership and staff have resulted in the quality of teaching deteriorating and outcomes for groups across the school being too low.
- Checks on teaching lack rigour and do not focus on pupils' progress.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account effectively for spending additional funding or for pupils' outcomes.
- Assessment information is not accurate. Systems in place are not used by all leaders and teachers to identify next steps for learners.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities underachieve in most year groups.
- Teaching lacks challenge and does not typically capture pupils' interest or inspire them to do well.
- There are significant weaknesses in pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attendance is slowly improving but remains below the national average for most groups.
- While diminishing, the number of fixed-term exclusions remains too high. Behaviour patterns are not analysed by leaders to detect where further improvements are needed.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 was below the national average in 2016 and 2017. Progress in writing was particularly low for most pupils in key stage 2.
- Leaders' judgements of children's starting points in early years are too cautious. There is insufficient evidence for all areas of learning.
- Children do not make sufficient progress in phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) in Reception Year.
- A good proportion of parents, carers and staff lack confidence in the leadership of the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Outcomes at the end of early years are rising steadily. They are now broadly average.
- Most pupils enjoy school and feel safe. They are polite, friendly and helpful.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well by adults.
- Before- and after-school care provides a safe and social environment for pupils who attend.

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 the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - effective leadership is secured and sustained at all levels to improve teaching, learning and assessment, so that all groups of pupils across the school make at least good progress
 - checks made on teaching focus sharply on the progress of pupils with different abilities
 - assessment information is accurate and is used to support teachers in identifying appropriate next steps for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics
 - provision for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective across all year groups
 - communication with parents and staff is improved to regain their confidence
 - governors rigorously hold leaders to account for spending additional funding, so that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities improve in all year groups
 - attendance improves further so that it is at least in line with the national average, including for those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - behaviour incidents are analysed to detect patterns and trends and action is taken to reduce these.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and thereby raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - teachers use their knowledge of pupils' different abilities to plan suitably challenging activities that enable them to make good progress
 - support provided for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is tailored appropriately to their needs
 - teachers promote and monitor pupils' reading habits and provide suitable books to allow early readers to develop their phonic skills
 - teachers address weaknesses in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar in order to improve the quality of pupils' writing
 - reasoning and problem-solving skills are further developed to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics
 - teachers provide tasks which interest and engage pupils so that incidents of low-level disruption or unfocused behaviour become rare.

■ Improve the early years provision by:

- making sure that the information gathered about the progress children make from their varying starting points is accurate
- a greater range of evidence being collected throughout the year to support teachers' assessments of all aspects of the curriculum
- ensuring that adults in Reception classes move children on in phonics when they show that they have mastered the sounds and letters taught.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to ascertain how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The headteacher and governors have not sustained a good quality of education for pupils. There has been a high staff turnover and significant turbulence in leadership since the previous inspection. The school is now too reliant on external support. Some leaders have been sourced through support commissioned on behalf of the local authority or through the school on a temporary and part-time basis. However, these are recent appointments and it is too early to detect their impact.
- Leadership capacity has been significantly weakened because leaders of key posts, such as assessment and phase leadership, are either absent or not operational, despite training provided by the local cluster group. Consequently, the school has been unable to secure consistent or sustainable improvements to teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, the quality of teaching is weak.
- Leaders have not provided teachers with effective guidance on how to improve their practice. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is too general and not consistent. Checks made do not focus sharply on the progress made by pupils of different abilities. As a result, leaders and staff fail to identify where additional support is needed. Leadership of mathematics has recently been strengthened through the commissioning of external support by the school. Training and support have been provided for individual staff and improvements made to marking and feedback to pupils.
- Recently introduced assessment systems are not used by all staff. Hence, there is an incomplete overview of pupils' achievement over time. Staff have not received sufficient training in assessing pupils or using the school system effectively. As a result, assessment information is unreliable. The systems do not provide accurate information on how well pupils are doing to help teachers plan appropriate next steps in learning. The headteacher and governors agree that data is inaccurate but have not prioritised improving this aspect. The school does not currently have a permanent assessment leader.
- Newly qualified teachers have not been supported well enough in their first year of teaching. They do not have a named mentor for support. They have not received their entitlement to weekly meetings, regular observations of their teaching or been provided with ongoing feedback on how to improve their practice. This has restricted their professional development this year and leaders have failed to meet their responsibilities in developing new practitioners.
- Leaders' use of the pupil premium is ineffective. Although disadvantaged pupils generally receive extra help with their learning, leaders have not made sure that this support is high quality and enables pupils to achieve well. Too few disadvantaged pupils attain the standards expected for their age by the time they leave the school.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not spent well and not managed effectively. Leadership of this aspect is shared by part-time staff, and staff report a lack of consistency in sharing information. Data is only checked at the end of the year, so leaders do not intervene early enough or identify where provision is weak. Checks are not carried out to determine whether leaders' actions are helping pupils achieve as well as they should or if pupils build sufficiently on their starting

points.

- While the majority of staff enjoy working at Banners Gate, staff morale is low. Staff surveys show that almost half of adults employed disagree that the school is well led and managed. Main concerns focus on poor communication, limited training and development, and lack of constructive feedback. Some staff also feel that recent initiatives have been introduced too quickly, without consultation and discussion. They feel that the number of changes introduced this year has added to their workload and pressure.
- Parents have mixed views of the school. The school's own survey of parents' views is more positive than that of Ofsted's online questionnaire. Of the parents who responded online, 47% would not recommend the school to other parents and 53% do not think the school is well led and managed. Concerns from parents include staff turnover, consistency of homework, last-minute and poor-quality communication and lack of information about pupils' progress.
- Leaders make appropriate use of the physical education (PE) and sport funding. It is spent on staff training, employing sports coaches to run extra-curricular clubs, buying equipment and transporting pupils to sports competitions. Pupils benefit from and enjoy specialist teaching, for example in dance, gymnastics and archery. They have also had some success in local sports tournaments. This boosts pupils' self-esteem and aids their physical fitness and well-being.
- The curriculum covers the full range of the national curriculum adequately. Pupils spoke positively about their enjoyment of topics such as 'Flight' and discrete art and science lessons. Displays around school celebrate pupils' achievements in different subjects. The curriculum is well enriched through trips, visitors and clubs. These enhance pupils' learning experiences and aid their personal development.
- The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

Governance of the school

- The governing body has been too slow to hold leaders to account. Governors are too ready to use recent challenges in staff turbulence as an explanation for the poor quality of teaching and learning over time.
- Governors do not monitor effectively the impact of additional funding received for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. They know that pupils' outcomes are not good enough and that differences remain between these pupils and others nationally but have not challenged leaders sufficiently to detect why.
- Governors have a good understanding of published assessment information but say that current data is inaccurate. Their interpretation of where weaknesses lie in current year groups is therefore unreliable.
- Governors have also had a recent review of their governance. This has given them some direction. They are committed in their roles and liaise closely with the headteacher. Minutes of meetings demonstrate that governors ask challenging and purposeful questions to gather information.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties to ensure that pupils are safe. For example, they attend safer recruitment training and recently commissioned a trainer to check and

overhaul the school's single central register of recruitment and vetting checks. They are aware of the local authority's audit on health and safety and its findings.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils told inspectors that they generally feel safe and happy in school. Most pupils feel confident to talk to an adult if they are worried. The majority of parents feel that their children are kept safe at school.
- Through the curriculum, leaders make sure that pupils develop an age-appropriate awareness of what to do to stay safe. For example, the lollipop man talks to younger pupils about road safety, while police officers discuss online safety with older pupils. Visits from the health caravan, together with teaching on drug awareness and anti-bullying, help ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- Staff receive suitable training on many safeguarding issues, including their statutory duties under the 'Prevent' duty. Support from the designated safeguarding leader and home-school officer ensures that staff are vigilant to signs or symptoms that could suggest a pupil may be at risk of harm.
- Robust systems are in place to record and monitor referrals relating to child protection issues. When staff identify concerns, leaders take prompt and appropriate action to secure the welfare of pupils who may be vulnerable.
- Together with the governing body, leaders take effective steps to ensure that the school site is safe and secure. When pupils take part in off-site visits, leaders assess risks carefully and take appropriate action to minimise any hazards so that pupils are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Overall, the quality of teaching is inadequate because pupils' outcomes are low and pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Too much teaching fails to challenge pupils to produce work at the standard of which they are capable. For example, the most able pupils in Year 2 worked on number bonds to 10 in mathematics while similar work was covered in Reception classes. Pupils in Year 6 also identified the properties of 3-D shapes, naming the number of edges, faces and vertices of shapes, which again many pupils found too easy and is an expectation for pupils in Year 2.
- The support for disadvantaged pupils has had minimal impact on their progress. This is because the quality of teaching and the subject knowledge of some adults who support disadvantaged pupils is weak. For example, adults described a cylinder as having 'no sides' and a cuboid being a 'stretched-out cube'. This is not accurate. Teaching over time has failed to diminish differences in pupils' attainment with other pupils nationally. Pupils do not make enough progress to help them catch up and reach the standards expected in reading, writing or mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not build well on their starting points because the quality of interventions is inconsistent. Interventions in Reception and

Year 6 are effective in addressing gaps in pupils' understanding. Other interventions, however, are less sharply focused. For example, some afternoon intervention time is spent resolving behaviour issues, sometimes from lunchtime. The impact of additional adult support is therefore ineffective and not used well.

- Teachers do not monitor pupils' home reading closely enough. Some pupils have only read a very small number of books since September because they have failed to bring their books into school. Staff do not follow this up or compensate by providing these pupils with additional adult support in school. Furthermore, suitable books are not matched to pupils' needs. Lower-ability pupils who have not yet reached the level required in Year 1 phonics have reading books which are not phonics-based or can be easily decoded. Pupils are therefore unable to practise the sounds and letters they have been taught. Older pupils read with more confidence but do not sustain their interest in books. They start new books regularly, but often fail to finish them. Reading progress is therefore curtailed.
- The teaching of writing is too variable. Teachers' expectations for the quality and quantity of pupils' writing are low in the majority of classes. For example, work in pupils' books and on display shows that teachers do not routinely correct pupils' basic errors, including misspelled words or omitted punctuation. Gains in pupils' writing skills are not sustained over time. These issues have not been tackled effectively and progress rates in writing remain low for most pupils.
- Teachers provide pupils with too few opportunities to deepen their mathematical understanding through problem-solving and reasoning. This is a key factor in pupils' underachievement. Work in pupils' books shows that leaders have not done enough to improve this aspect of mathematics teaching. They have relied too heavily on arithmetic and calculation knowledge.
- There is some effective teaching in the school, but it is outweighed by too much which is inadequate. Pupils' progress rates are affected by the inconsistencies.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders and teachers have not taken sufficient steps to encourage pupils' positive attitudes to their education. Teaching does not inspire pupils to aim high and challenge themselves. Limited opportunities are provided to promote pupils' independence, and work in pupils' books shows that they do not take enough pride in their learning or achievements.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. Most are respectful and considerate towards other pupils and adults. Pupils readily take on additional responsibility, such as head boy and girl, school council and peer mediators. This adds to their levels of independence and enables them to make a positive contribution to school life.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is suitably catered for. School events, such as 'diversity day' and teaching in religious education, strongly promote an

appreciation and tolerance of others from different cultures and backgrounds. Pupils have a good understanding of British values as these are taught well in assemblies and reinforced through displays around school. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Pupils have a sound knowledge of how to keep fit and stay healthy. Healthy snacks can be purchased at playtimes and the lunchbox policy is well enforced. This limits the amount of chocolate and crisps pupils eat. PE lessons and after-school clubs contribute to pupils' physical fitness and well-being.
- The breakfast club and before- and after-school clubs provide a useful resource for parents. Breakfast club provides a calm and happy provision for pupils who attend. It provides a good start to the day. Pupils are well supervised and behave well. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Attendance is improving due to steps taken by leaders to track and monitor pupils' absence. The home-school officer monitors this aspect with additional support from external agencies. However, overall attendance remains below the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Leaders have reviewed the school's behaviour policy and taken steps to improve behaviour. This has resulted in there being no permanent exclusions this year and a reduced number of fixed-term exclusions. However, leaders do not analyse the incidents or number of pupils involved. This prevents them from detecting patterns and trends and providing support to reduce, and potentially avoid, further exclusions.
- Where teaching is poorly delivered or work is too easy, pupils get restless and lose focus. For example, Year 5 pupils were required to cut out and stick in their books the stages of the human life cycle, together with the supporting text. This required very little effort by pupils and there was no development of their thinking or literacy skills. Some pupils quickly lost interest in the work.
- Parents, pupils and staff have some concerns about behaviour, particularly at lunchtime. The management of pupils' behaviour is also variable. Inspectors witnessed a small number of staff shouting at pupils in an effort to manage their behaviour. This denotes a lack of experience in dealing with low-level disruption effectively.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the sanctions and rewards in place. Behaviour zone boards in classrooms help to maintain an orderly environment. Most pupils behave well at breaktimes and move around the school sensibly.
- Pupils understand that bullying can take different forms, for example verbal, physical and online. They feel that where incidents are reported, staff take action. Most pupils say that behaviour overall is quite good.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The progress of pupils from different starting points is variable, with many pupils making inadequate progress over time. This has been particularly low in writing in the last two years.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 and 2017. Pupils do not make good progress or build on the levels achieved at the end of Reception Year.
- Standards at the end of key stage 2 were below the national average in reading and writing in 2016 and below in all subjects in 2017. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth is below the national average for both key stages in all subjects. Less than a third of pupils have achieved the standard expected at the end of Year 6 in all three of reading, writing and mathematics in the last two years.
- Pupils' outcomes in subjects other than English and mathematics are also inadequate. In science, for example, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 has been below the national average for the last two years. Achievement in other subjects is hampered by pupils' weak literacy and numeracy skills.
- There is a three-year declining trend in the proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected in the Year 1 phonics screening check, with results being below the national average for the last two years. Leaders' assessments indicate that a greater proportion will reach the standard required compared to last year, but results will remain below the 2017 national average.
- Widespread weaknesses in teaching mean that any improvements in pupils' achievement are fragile and not sustained over time. Current pupils continue to underachieve considerably. They have too much ground to make up in order to reach the standard of which they are capable. For example, only one in five girls is working at the expected standards for their age in mathematics in Year 5, and only two in five boys.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make weak progress over time. Disadvantaged pupils also underachieve considerably, despite the additional funding the school receives to support them. Less than half of current disadvantaged pupils in Year 2 are working at the expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment is variable, but mainly low, in most year groups.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leadership of early years requires improvement. Initial assessments made of some children in the early years are too cautious. Leaders do not take account of what children are capable of or use the early evidence collected well enough to capture accurate starting points. This results in an inaccurate overview of progress rates of children in early years. Additionally, there is insufficient evidence in children's learning journeys of all areas of learning to substantiate teachers' judgements, for example in technology, people and communities and being imaginative.
- The teaching of phonics in Reception Year requires improvement. Some support staff who are given responsibility for leading phonics groups do not expand or develop children's range of sounds well enough. Books checked show limited progression for children in the lower-ability groups. For example, teaching focused on the 'nk' sound earlier in the year was repeatedly practised for four months. As a result, children are

not at the level they need to be by the time they enter Year 1 because they have not learned a sufficient range of letters and sounds.

- There is some effective teaching in other aspects of the curriculum. The outdoor area is used well and provides a good range of activities for children to develop the prime areas of learning: personal, social and emotional, physical development and communication and language. For example, children demonstrated good levels of skill and accuracy in bouncing and catching a large ball and showed high levels of curiosity and interest when discussing and writing about the lifecycle of a frog based on the tadpoles they observed. As a result, outcomes at the end of early years are rising and are now in line with the national average.
- Induction procedures are effective and parents are encouraged to support their children from the outset. Parents are involved through homework, attendance at school events and through completing 'wow' vouchers, which celebrate and capture activities children have undertaken at home.
- Teacher-led activities are well matched to children's abilities. Adults model language well and question children to check their levels of understanding well and develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Children behave well and play sensibly together. They follow routines carefully and show good levels of engagement and concentration during their chosen activity.
- Leaders ensure that the welfare requirements are met and that children are well looked after and safe. Children benefit from kind, supportive relationships with all staff. This contributes to their feeling safe and being happy at school.

School details

Unique reference number	136815
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10048922

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	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Cattell
Headteacher	Fleur Greaves
Telephone number	0121 464 7355
Website	www.bannersgate.bham.sch.uk/
Email address	enquiry@bannersgate.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 January 2015

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. It is two-form entry with a nursery.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- Breakfast club and before- and after-school clubs are managed by the school.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced many changes in staff, including at senior leadership level.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. They saw 25 parts of lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. Observations of intervention groups and before-school activities were also carried out.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities and members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the company commissioned by the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and conduct, both during visits to classrooms and at other points during the school day, including lunchtime. Inspectors also visited two assemblies.
- Inspectors took account of the 38 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the school's own parent survey and comments made by parents as they brought their children to school. Inspectors also spoke to parents who requested to meet with them and considered the views of those expressed in parent texts and emails.
- Pupils' views were collected by talking to pupils both formally and informally during the school day. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the 34 survey responses from staff and met with those who requested individual meetings.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning and examined the work in their books.
- Inspectors reviewed a number of documents, including the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing, the school development plan, leaders' records of current achievement, leaders' and external reports about the school, minutes of governors' meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mark Hinton	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Whitcombe	Ofsted Inspector

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