

Aqueduct Primary School

Castlefields Way, Aqueduct, Telford, Shropshire TF4 3RP

Inspection dates

12–13 June 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment has declined since the previous inspection.
- From their individual starting points, pupils are not currently making enough progress in their learning, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are not consistently making enough progress.
- Leaders and managers have not maintained the quality of education since the last inspection.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching of reading, writing and mathematics restrict pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- Teaching in some lessons does not motivate pupils to achieve. Pupils sit and wait for further instructions, rather than participating enthusiastically in their learning.
- The low-level disruptive behaviour of a handful of pupils interrupts the learning of their peers.
- The proportion of pupils regularly absent from school remains above average, despite attempts to bring about a decrease.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and deputy headteacher are currently taking the right actions to improve the school.
- Recent improvements to teaching introduced by senior leaders have had insufficient time to make a significant difference to pupils' progress.
- Children are now making faster progress in early years from joining Reception.
- Pupils' behaviour, although requiring improvement, is improving.
- High-quality training provided for teachers and teaching assistants is improving the quality of teaching.
- School leaders have created a rich and diverse curriculum.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact leaders and managers, including governors, are having on pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - refining improvement planning so it is more precise
 - monitoring the rate of improvement more rigorously
 - using the outcome of an external review of the spending of pupil premium to guide improvement planning for these pupils
 - precisely tracking the rate at which the most able pupils are progressing in their learning
 - supporting middle leaders to secure further improvement in their areas of responsibility
 - substantially reducing the number of pupils regularly absent from school.
- Strengthen the consistency of the quality of teaching so all groups of pupils are making faster progress in their learning by:
 - ensuring that all teachers adhere to the expectations of senior leaders
 - providing further training to improve teaching
 - making sure teaching assistants and teachers adhere to the agreed marking and assessment expectations
 - helping teachers to focus more precisely on meeting the learning needs of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Eliminate the remaining low-level disruption in a few classes so learning is not disrupted by:
 - providing additional training so teachers can manage pupils' disruptive behaviour more effectively in classrooms.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Governors and senior leaders recognise that groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, are not consistently making the progress of which they are capable, despite the additional funding provided to support these groups in their learning.
- Many middle leaders are new to their roles this academic year and their impact on substantially improving pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics across all year groups is yet to be seen.
- The most able pupils are not currently tracked well enough as a group for school leaders, or governors, to check on their progress.
- Processes for monitoring, and school improvement planning, require greater precision so that school leaders and governors can track the rate of improvement more accurately.
- The new senior leadership team has a clear vision for school improvement. They set and communicate to the staff high expectations for the pupils. However, these high expectations of pupils are not consistently evident in all classrooms.
- School leaders evaluate the current position of the school accurately. They have a good understanding of where the weaknesses lie and what must be done to improve the school further.
- The new senior leadership team has dealt with weak teaching decisively and effectively. However, teaching overall still requires improvement.
- There have been recent improvements in pupils' behaviour and in the provision in the early years and the teaching and learning for those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The leadership of the teaching of reading throughout school is now much more effective since the deputy headteacher took on this role in November 2017.
- Teachers praise the high-quality support programmes senior leaders are providing, which are improving the quality of their teaching. However, additional training is required to improve teaching further.
- The creative, lively and exciting curriculum is underpinned by values related to living in modern Britain. This means pupils learn, for example, about having due tolerance for others who are different from them.
- Additional funding provided by the physical education (PE) and sports premium is being used well. This is resulting in many more pupils attending sporting clubs and activities.
- The school is benefiting well from the external support commissioned by the governing body and brokered by the Severn Teaching School Alliance. This is helping the school to improve, particularly in the early years.

Governance of the school

- Governors took their focus off school improvement after the previous inspection to deal

with many staff changes. The teachers they appointed, in many cases, were inexperienced and as a result pupils' outcomes declined. Governors see the appointment of the new headteacher and the effective senior leadership team as a pivotal part of their strategy for school improvement. This new team is effective, and improvements are now visible. However, the impact of these improvements on pupils' progress is only just starting to be seen.

- Governors are asking more challenging questions about pupils' underachievement to aid improvement.
- Governors regularly participate in learning walks and work scrutiny in school, so they can check on improvements which are taking place.
- When difficult staffing decisions must be taken to improve teaching, governors do not shy away from them.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The culture of safeguarding is well established and embedded in school.
- Senior leaders have increased the size of the team leading safeguarding, so pupils are not vulnerable if certain staff are absent from school.
- Designated safeguarding leaders regularly question staff to check their understanding of what they should do if a safeguarding concern is raised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching remains inconsistent across the school in reading, writing and mathematics, resulting in pupils, and groups of pupils, not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Not all teachers consistently follow the agreed school policy for marking and assessment.
- In a few lessons, pupils achieve little because the teaching is mundane and fails to motivate pupils.
- Where learning activities are well matched to pupils' abilities, pupils make appropriate progress.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength. Phonics lessons progress well and pupils are keen to learn and further improve their reading skills by using their phonics understanding across the curriculum.
- Some teachers and teaching assistants use questioning and ongoing assessment skilfully in lessons. This is helping pupils to progress rapidly in their learning. In one class where pupils were learning about the life of Charles Darwin they were encouraged skilfully to discuss the differences between botany and biology.
- Where teachers' subject knowledge is secure, they use this well to plan exciting learning tasks for pupils. This helps pupils to progress effectively in their learning.
- A few teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively in

lessons to help pupils visualise what they are learning about.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders' work to help pupils understand what constitutes bullying and how to address it is effective. For example, pupils know how bullying differs from falling out with their friends.
- Vulnerable pupils are well supported in the school's caring and nurturing learning environment.
- Pupils are taught effectively about the dangers in modern society and how to keep themselves safe. Topics such as sexting are dealt with appropriately and sensitively by the school. Pupils know how to reduce potential risks to their safety when using the internet. This is helping to keep pupils safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In a few lessons visited, a handful of boys and girls were disrupting learning. Other pupils reported to inspectors that they do not like having their learning interrupted by these incidents of poor behaviour.
- Not all teachers' behaviour management skills are effective enough to deal with the poorer behaviour of some pupils. Consequently, not all pupils understand how important it is not to interrupt the learning of others.
- About a quarter of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and those who spoke to the inspectors, think behaviour is not as good as it should be.
- Inspectors agree that behaviour is not consistently good in lessons. However, more recently the behaviour of pupils has been improved by the new headteacher. Around the school, pupils generally behave well. They are polite and hold doors open for each other and for adults.
- The proportion of pupils regularly absent from school has been slightly reduced this year, but it remains too high.
- Fixed-term exclusions have reduced this year because of the effective way staff have worked with families to support the pupils concerned.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment has declined since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics and reading, has not been good enough over several years.
- For the past two years the school has failed to meet the government's floor standards.

- Current pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not good because of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Groups of pupils such as the disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are also not making the rates of progress they should across all year groups because of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' books and the latest school performance information shows pupils' progress is now beginning to improve, particularly where the quality of teaching is more effective.
- The proportion of pupils on track to be successful in the phonics screening check this year has increased from last year because of more effective teaching.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 are currently making faster progress than other pupils in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 1 and Year 5, again disadvantaged pupils are making more progress than other pupils.
- Other groups of pupils, such as pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, are now making faster progress than previously.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision is efficiently led. Effective training has been provided for the early years team. As a result, children's attainment is improving. For the last two years, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development has been broadly in line with the national average.
- From their individual starting points, children are making progress in their learning because of the high-quality support and effective teaching in the early years. Disadvantaged children are making similar rates of progress when compared to other children.
- Parents and carers report that they are pleased with the arrangements for helping their children to start school. Reception staff work closely with children to support them well in their learning.
- Learning and development opportunities are brought to life well for children. During the inspection, one child acting as an inspector, and wearing her own identification badge, was heard to ask teachers why they had so many books around the classroom before making notes on her clipboard.
- The classroom is language rich. Children are encouraged to develop a love of reading and explore texts.
- Lower- and higher-ability children are given learning tasks which are well matched to their needs, which supports their learning effectively.
- Children behave impeccably. They are kind and supportive of each other. These attitudes help them to learn.
- The early years team is diligent in ensuring that the children are kept safe.
- The outdoor learning area needs further development, which is planned by the school.

School details

Unique reference number	123444
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	10042901

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Marsh
Headteacher	Tammy Lockley
Telephone number	01952 386210
Website	www.aqueductprimary.co.uk
Email address	h2175@telford.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 May 2014

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans are above average.
- The school does not meet the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school, based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015, 2016 and 2017.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons and parts of lessons. Some of these were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, school staff and three members of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the provider of the support brokered for the school by the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons, during breaks and lunchtimes. They also spoke with several parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised the pupils' work during lessons and work produced over time in a range of their books. They also listened to a few pupils from Year 1, Year 2 and Year 5 reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at the latest school performance information showing the progress pupils currently in the school are making.
- Other documentation scrutinised included plans for school improvement, safeguarding information, behaviour logs, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 48 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors considered 17 free-text responses from parents. There were no responses to the pupil or staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Declan McCauley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Hanson	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Cladingbowl	Ofsted Inspector

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

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