

# Park Junior School, Wellingborough

Great Park Street, Wellingborough, NN8 4PH

**Inspection dates** 20–21 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Most pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, most attain nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The achievement of pupils in the specially resourced provision (the 'ready room') is outstanding.
- The headteacher has been highly effective in bringing about rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' learning.
- Teaching is typically good, and is sometimes outstanding. Teachers explain new learning clearly and make sure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise new skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are keen to learn and clearly know how to keep safe. Rates of attendance are consistently above average.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, check the school's effectiveness regularly and closely.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to plan their own work and think for themselves.
- Sometimes teachers' use of questioning and feedback to pupils during lessons has limited effect on moving learning forward.
- In too many instances, teachers' marking does little to help pupils improve their work or enable them to make necessary corrections.
- In some lessons the most able pupils in Years 3 to 5 are not challenged enough and the pace at which they make progress slackens.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes and observed teaching in 16 lessons. They were accompanied by the headteacher during six of these.
- They took account of questionnaires completed by 38 members of staff, along with 34 responses submitted by parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors looked at data about pupils' progress. They scrutinised the work in pupils' books, heard a sample of pupils read and held discussions with pupils about their learning and experience of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior members of staff, teaching assistants and four members of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness, the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, behaviour records and safeguarding checks.

## Inspection team

Mike Thompson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Margaret Jones

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Park Junior School is similar in size to the average primary school. It has eight classes, two in each year group. The majority of pupils are White British. The other pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Just over half of these pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, supported through school action, is broadly average. The proportion supported at the school action plus level or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs, referred to as 'the ready room' by staff and pupils. This small unit is for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties (BSED) and is located within the school buildings. At the time of inspection, there were six pupils on roll. Four of these, who attend on a part-time basis, are from other schools in the area.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils off-site.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning for its own pupils and for pupils from a nearby infant school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the pace of pupils' progress by developing consistently outstanding features of teaching in all lessons, ensuring that teachers:
  - routinely use strategies, including questioning, to make sure that pupils think more for themselves and develop skills in planning how they are to tackle and set out their work
  - use feedback from pupils in lessons to focus sharply on gaps in pupils' learning rather on their progress in completing their tasks
  - make their marking of pupils' work more effective by setting out clearly what pupils need to do to improve, and always check that pupils respond to the comments made and complete their corrections.
  - fine-tune their planning, the activities set and use of questioning so that the most able pupils in Years 3 to 5 are suitably challenged.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has risen over the past three years because pupils are making good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 3 and achieve well. In 2012, national data showed that the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation of level 4 in both English and mathematics rose by 14 percentage points to 78%.
- Good progress in reading, writing and mathematics stems from the strong focus placed by the school on ensuring that pupils understand why they need these skills. Those in need of extra help to improve certain aspects of their knowledge and understanding are clearly identified by the teachers' effective systems used for checking progress and benefit from good quality support in 'group time' sessions. Pupils learning to speak English as an additional language are helped to widen their vocabulary and deepen their understanding when reading.
- Pupils make particularly good progress in developing their skills as writers. There has been a big increase in the amount of imaginative writing produced by pupils. This is because teachers plan writing tasks well and there make sure that pupils have good opportunities to write creatively at length in a range of subjects.
- Pupils develop their skills in numeracy well. They become good at recognising patterns in numbers and, by Year 6, most have accurate recall of multiplication tables.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding make good progress along with their classmates. The attainment of these pupils varies significantly from year-to-year. This is largely due to differences in the proportions of pupils with severe learning difficulties within those eligible for additional funding. Typically, the attainment of these pupils is the equivalent of between one to two terms below that of their classmates. However, their starting points are almost always lower.
- Throughout the school the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is closely checked. Teachers use the information gathered to adjust their planning and to carefully tailor the additional help provided. These pupils make good progress and achieve successfully.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Parents feel that their children are taught well and appreciate the homework set for their children. Pupils say that they enjoy lessons because their work is interesting and fun.
- Although there is some inconsistency remaining, teaching has many strong features. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour extremely well, and relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Teachers set motivating tasks that skilfully hold pupils' attention and they typically move learning on at a good pace.
- Teachers ensure that pupils understand what they are doing and have plenty of opportunities to practice newly acquired skills. In most instances, they accurately pitch work at different levels of difficulty so that the tasks provided for pupils are challenging, but achievable. Occasionally, the over use of worksheets in some classes and too little variation in the tasks set impedes the progress of more able pupils in Years 3 to 5.

- Where teaching generates high levels of interest and enjoyment, learning is often at least good. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher made effective use of the technology provided by the interactive white board. This challenged pupils to devise mathematical rules to explain links between numbers, as a series was progressively revealed. The session resulted in many thoughtful responses from pupils, underpinned by good questioning by the teacher, as the problem developed and was finally solved.
- Teaching assistants show good levels of skill in supporting learning in lessons. They work well in partnership with teachers and many display good skills in using questions to help develop pupils' understanding.
- Teaching in the 'ready room' is highly effective in meeting the wide-ranging needs of pupils of different ages and levels of ability. Pupils benefit considerably from the high degree of individual help available to them. Adults are careful to ensure that these pupils are supported by them rather than led by them, and make sure that the pupils develop skills in thinking for themselves.
- The most effective teachers instinctively make adjustments to their teaching to ensure that the quality of pupils' learning is the main focus, but this is not always the case. Sometimes lessons are too tightly structured and do not allow pupils to make decisions about their learning or use their initiative.
- In some instances, teachers' feedback to pupils during lessons is highly effective in developing learning. In other instances, feedback comprises a quick check on completion of tasks rather than focusing sharply on any gaps in pupils' learning. Additionally, the dialogue between teachers and pupils through marking is not always focussed on helping pupils improve their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- In lessons, and when moving around the school, pupils' behave impeccably. They listen well, are always keen to answer teachers' questions, and are invariably engrossed in their work.
- The management of behaviour in the 'ready room' is outstanding, and enables these pupils to develop valuable social skills.
- Pupils clearly know the school rules and understand the reasons for them. They also appreciate the way in which the school celebrates good behaviour. School records show that there are very few instances of unacceptable behaviour or bullying of any kind. Pupils say that when these do occur, the school responds quickly, and effectively.
- There have been no exclusions. Despite the limited space in the playgrounds, pupils' behaviour at playtime is outstanding. Pupils play safely and show good consideration for others when joining in games. Pupils play an important role in ensuring that playtimes are useful social experiences, for example by acting as 'buddies' and helping others who feel unhappy.
- The success of the school's strong programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) is evident in the pupils' clear understanding of how to keep safe both at school and at home. It also helps pupils to get on well with one another, for example by understanding how to resolve disputes. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and have a very strong sense of fair play. They are unfailingly polite and well mannered. They show high levels of respect for each other and adults, and are immensely proud of their school.

- Parents value greatly the way in which the school promotes high standards of behaviour, and the quality of education and care provided. They show this through the support that they give to the school, and by ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive punctually.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has successfully built on the momentum reported at the time of the last inspection and has effectively developed the teaching and leadership skills of the staff. Leaders and managers carry out thorough and regular checks to find out how well pupils are achieving.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school to which parents and carers, staff and governors fully subscribe. This is shared effectively with parents and carers through, for example, regular newsletters and the school website. In turn, parents have extremely positive views of the school.
- The family support worker is making a marked difference in developing links with parents. Her work has resulted in the number of 'hard to reach' families and has helped sustain the improvements in punctuality and attendance which is above average.
- Training and in-house support has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers have been highly receptive in adopting new methods in order to accelerate pupils' progress. Leaders effectively develop the quality of teaching by modelling the very best practice.
- Partnerships with other schools locally are strong. For example, the daily breakfast club, which is very well attended, includes children from a nearby infant school. The 'ready room' provides outreach services to other school by working with teaching assistants from these schools in modelling outstanding practice in supporting pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. The school is also a leading local school in promoting diversity.
- The curriculum is well structured and is enriched through regular first-hand learning experiences provided through visits and visitors to the school. There is a good range of activities provided for pupils outside lesson time. The curriculum is highly effective in promoting pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its provision for music, sport, and PSHE.
- Despite limited outdoor space, the school has a high profile locally in promoting pupils' achievement in sport. Twelve different sporting activities are provided for pupils, and specialist coaches are employed, for example in basketball and dancing. Its work is now recognised through local and regional awards.
- The local authority has confidence in the school's development and has provided 'light-touch' support for this successful school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body supports and checks the work of the school effectively and is an active partner in devising the school's improvement plan. It is well informed about the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to good management of staff performance and effective allocation of the school's finances and pupil premium. These are tracked through regular visits. The governing body carries out its statutory duties thoroughly. It makes sure that safeguarding requirements are fully implemented and regularly reviewed.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121870
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406058

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Heather Saunders
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Tebbutt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01933 224501
<b>Fax number</b>	01933 277976
<b>Email address</b>	bursar@park-jun.northants-ecl.gov.uk

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