

# Leigh Beck Junior School

Point Road, Canvey Island, SS8 7TD

**Inspection dates** 9–10 January 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' attainment and progress rates are low.
- Progress in mathematics is weaker than in English. Both are improving but are not yet consistently good.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy skill is improving but requires further development.
- Strategies to improve writing are still being put in place in some classes. Work is not always challenging or practical enough in mathematics.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to demonstrate their understanding by explaining what they have learned.
- Although there is no inadequate teaching and some is outstanding, teaching requires improvement.
- Systems to ensure consistency in marking, assessment and quality of presentation are being used across the school but are at an early stage of development.
- Pupils sometimes repeat errors, such as spelling mistakes, because they do not all follow up on the advice given in teachers' marking.
- Attendance is rising but is average.

### The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn.
- Pupils feel safe in school, and parents agree.
- The headteacher has acted swiftly to improve teaching and raise achievement. He knows his school well.
- Staff and subject leaders are working as a team with governors and senior leaders to ensure that monitoring and evaluation of progress is regular and effective.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons taught by 14 staff. Four observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed a range of activities to support individuals and small groups of pupils.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, staff, a representative of the local authority, the executive headteacher of the adjacent infants' school, and two groups of pupils.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, the inspectors took account of the 128 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 35 staff. Inspectors spoke to parents in the playground before school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They also looked at the school's improvement plan, data on pupils' attainment and progress, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, a large range of policies and procedures, and the school's arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors attended an assembly and visited the school's breakfast club. They carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work jointly with the members of the senior leadership team.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading.

## Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Angela Podmore	Additional Inspector
Sa'ad Khaldi	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Canvey Schools Partnership, a group of 12 infant, junior and secondary schools working together for some services such as staff development.
- The very large majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is in line with the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional government funding for particular groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club.

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

- Improve the quality of all teaching to good or better by:
  - checking regularly on pupils' progress and getting them to explain what they have just learned in order to demonstrate their understanding
  - making sure that strategies to improve writing are used consistently across the school
  - ensuring that work is always challenging enough to bring about rapid progress, especially in mathematics
  - applying the new systems for marking, assessment and quality of presentation and ensuring that pupils follow up on advice given by teachers in marking.
- Raise achievement in English and mathematics by:
  - placing greater emphasis on pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and understanding of the sounds that letters make (phonics)
  - providing regular and frequent opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills through practical examples.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because attainment has varied over time and progress rates, although now rising across the school are not yet consistently good.
- The school monitors pupils' progress across all year groups. This shows a trend of improvement and that from their starting point in Year 3, all groups are making expected progress. Progress rates rose slightly from 2012 to 2013 in reading and further for those making more than expected progress in mathematics.
- Attainment has been below national averages but is now rising. The school's current data, based on their own assessment on entry, more regular tracking and increasingly accurate assessment, shows improvements in both English and mathematics, including the attainment of more-able pupils, which is at least in line with national averages.
- The rising trend in English is due to more systematic approaches to ensure that pupils' spelling, punctuation, grammar and understanding of the sounds that letters make (phonics) are continually reinforced. This work is still at a comparatively early stage.
- In mathematics, work on mental mathematics and quick recall is having a similar positive effect. The school has recognised that pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their mathematical skills by working on practical examples. The school has stopped grouping pupils by ability in the first term of Year 3 to consolidate all pupils' basic skills. It has also added an additional group further up the school where leaders determined that further reinforcement of basic mathematical skills was needed.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. They show developing use of phonics to sound out unfamiliar words, good prediction skills and can discuss their likes and dislikes for different types of writing. They have increasing opportunities to write at length through a thematic topic work but this is not consistently the case. Pupils' growing confidence is reflected in an improving standard of presentation of their work.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making better progress due to the introduction of an additional teacher to support pupils at risk of not achieving two levels of progress. This is proving effective. Progress is carefully tracked and support is put in place by the class teacher working together with this additional teacher. At present, pupils eligible for the pupil premium are about three terms behind in both mathematics and English but the gaps are closing at a faster rate than previously.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making faster progress than previously because of the range of support provided, such as 'top up' mathematics sessions, and the appointment of a full-time inclusion manager to meet their needs. Termly pupil progress meetings and closer monitoring of their achievements mean that support can be quickly adjusted and that all pupils have equal opportunities to improve.
- The school has a current focus on developing skills in literacy and numeracy through further opportunities to practise in smaller ability groups in Years 5 and 6, designed to build on pupils' growing excitement about what they are learning. Pupils appreciate the widening range of opportunities, as shown by their enthusiasm for clubs and extra-curricular activities.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because, over time, it has not led to consistent, rapid and sustained progress for individuals. The current pattern is improving and teaching is having a more consistent and positive impact on improving achievement in lessons.
- Joint observations of teaching carried out by inspectors and the headteacher confirmed that, mostly, teaching requires improvement. Some outstanding teaching was observed. No inadequate teaching was seen.
- Where teaching requires improvement, work is not sufficiently challenging, especially in mathematics to ensure that all pupils make enough progress. Pupils' understanding is not always sufficiently checked; for example, by getting them to explain what they have just learned so that they can demonstrate what they know.
- Where teaching is good or better, pupils are engaged and enjoy their learning because the stimulating material encourages high-quality work, activities are sufficiently challenging, questioning probes for understanding and relationships are highly positive. The school is increasing opportunities for teachers to share what they do best in the classroom, especially how they improve pupils' writing skills, so that these strategies are consistently well used in all classes.
- Teachers and support assistants work together securely in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson on decimals, both adults made good use of questions and sums to try to catch pupils out and thereby increased their engagement with the lesson.
- Teachers make effective use of information and communication technology and make links between subjects. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on empathy, the teacher introduced pictures of conditions for a young slave of the same age as the pupils and asked them to imagine how they would feel if they were the slave. This resulted in some high-quality responses and even the least-able pupils surprised themselves by what they were able to produce.
- The teaching of literacy and mathematics has been a focus area for the school. The range of strategies and resources now being used in lessons are increasing pupils' understanding and helping teachers to assess how they might present information in challenging ways which also ensure pupils' engagement with the subject.
- The teaching of reading is good. Pupils enjoy reading because teachers ensure that they have a good variety of reading materials on subjects which interest them and with the right amount of challenge. In a Year 3 English lesson identifying the features of a diary, pupils first undertook a series of reading activities, such as identifying plurals and pronunciation of difficult words. Their success in the reading activities enabled the teacher to progress seamlessly to the writing activity.
- A new marking policy is being applied. Although there are examples of good practice across all year groups, and pupils have targets on the front of their books, not all pupils are fully aware of how to improve their work. Some variations in presentation remain. Pupils do not always follow up on the advice given in teachers' marking to avoid repetition of errors, especially in spelling.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are unfailingly polite to

each other, to adults and visitors, and are keen to show off their school, which they would recommend to others. They value the rewards programme, which results in team points leading to a trophy and loss of 'golden time' for infractions.

- Pupils regard their school as a community where everyone matters. Assemblies reinforce this point and are supplemented by the work done in lessons on personal, social and health education. Some pupils have behaviour plans; the support provided for anyone with challenging behaviour is good, with encouragement to pupils to manage their own behaviour effectively. The breakfast club is specifically designed to reinforce good behaviour.
- Pupils are expected to help each other in the playground and around the school. They have created their own mid-day rules for the dining hall and speak about the strong, well-managed e-safety programme led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Pupils observed and spoken to by inspectors were excited about the increasing challenge in many lessons and the resources now being used. As a result, attitudes to learning are very positive. Pupils' own confidence that they can achieve is reflected in the current increase in attainment and progress rates.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire all felt that their children were safe and the vast majority agreed that behaviour was good.
- Health and safety issues are well-managed and the school has clear policies to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber bullying, and affirm that an adult is always nearby to help in case of any difficulty. Pupils also expect to be able to sort out some problems themselves; for example, as playground leaders.
- Temporary exclusions from school are rare and there have been no permanent exclusions.
- Attendance is average but has risen markedly this year as the systems put in place to improve it have had their impact. The school has challenged several families about taking holidays during term time. Awards, including letters of praise, are given to pupils to encourage good attendance.

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

- The headteacher has moved swiftly and effectively to address weaknesses in achievement and the quality of teaching. Working closely with the deputy headteacher and senior leadership team, he has developed tighter monitoring and assessment systems to ensure that progress rates continue to rise.
- The school has good capacity for further improvement because the headteacher has acted quickly, in tandem with the senior leadership team and subject leaders, to make sure that the quality of teaching is rising, with a consequent effect on attainment and progress. The staff team ensures that behaviour is consistently good, and links with parents are strong and growing.
- Subject leaders say that they feel like a team because, as a body, they have identified the issues facing the school and are tackling them together. They participate collectively in weekly discussions about what needs to be adjusted and about the implementation of next steps in driving improvements. They have increased responsibility for checking on progress and attainment in their subject areas, and this includes checking on individuals' progress at regular

intervals. Mathematics and English leaders have been working closely with the local authority advisory team to secure expected and better than expected progress. They also have many ideas, such as carousels of mathematical activities and computer clubs, which they are now implementing to move their subjects forward.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a thematic approach to link subjects together. Topics are carefully chosen so that they will appeal to all learners. The school has taken an active lead in addressing those elements of the new curriculum which are already available because leaders and staff are determined to improve the school. Enrichment days, which link several subjects, now help to develop pupils' skills and interests.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to explore values and beliefs. They value the behaviour policy, to which they have contributed. There is a strong sense of community on the island, and this aspect is brought into cultural development. Local links, such as the Canvey Schools' Partnership, help with the development of social skills and reinforce learning.
- Sports premium funding has been carefully allocated to ensure wider pupil participation and increased ways to stay fit. There are strong links with the local sports partnership across the island to ensure long-term benefits for the community and its pupils. These include shared specialist teaching and access to a 'top up swimming' programme. Pupils are being trained as lunchtime play leaders and the range of sports clubs has increased to engage as many pupils as possible.
- The local authority has strong links with the school, including through the support it has offered to the new headteacher. Regular visits have helped to ensure that work done in mathematics and English is to an increasingly high standard.
- The school is working closely with the infants' school which shares the same site to ensure, for example, that assessment procedures are consistent.
- There are rigorous procedures to manage teachers' work. Staff are held accountable for the performance and progress of pupils.
- Links with parents are good. Regular newsletters, parent workshops and a parent council ensure that parents are well informed. Parents' involvement in the school is reflected in the large response to the online questionnaire.
- Safeguarding meets all current requirements. Procedures for child protection are rigorous and carefully documented.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - With the guidance of the headteacher, governors have organised themselves well. Minutes of the governing body meetings reflect governors' increased readiness to challenge the school and a shared agreement with senior leaders on those areas requiring improvement, which they are confident in tackling. Governors visit the school regularly and have a governors' book to record their findings about teaching and progress. Governors have been trained in the understanding and use of data to better analyse progress rates. Governors review the uses of the pupil premium funding to ensure it is having an impact on pupils' progress. They contribute to formation of the school's improvement plan and are ready to reward good teaching whenever possible, for example, by further professional development.

## 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>	115054
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	431725

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>	360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joan Logan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Daren Partridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 683037
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