

Catherine Junior School

Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5LD

Inspection dates

11–12 February 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. In particular, pupils' progress in English has not been good enough. In 2013, pupils did not reach the standards they are capable of in either English or mathematics.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not fully caught up after their past underachievement.
- Too much teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils because the work set is sometimes too easy for them.
- The work of teaching assistants is not planned carefully enough. In a few lessons, they are not supporting pupils effectively.
- Some teachers are not assessing work accurately enough and using this information to plan what pupils need to learn next.
- Senior leaders have introduced a thorough system for measuring progress but teachers are not yet using it. Although teaching is improving, it is not doing so at a fast enough rate.
- Governors have not challenged school leaders effectively over the last few years.
- In a few lessons, pupils lack enthusiasm for learning when their work is not hard enough or they spend too long covering work they already understand.
- Some staff with extra responsibilities have not been effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders have introduced new schemes for the teaching of English and mathematics which are helping pupils to make faster progress in both subjects.
- Pupils who arrive at the school with no prior knowledge of English usually make good progress in their language skills.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Staff and pupils have coped very well with the difficulties they have encountered as a result of a fire in the school and the need to move to temporary accommodation.
- The school's very rich cultural mix is celebrated and shared well. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, cultural, social and moral development, and pupils have the opportunity to study topics that interest them.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 lessons, six of which were joint observations with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of shorter visits to lessons and heard pupils read in all year groups.
- The inspectors looked at the school’s analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to behaviour and safety, minutes of meetings of the governing body, planning and monitoring files, school improvement reports and attendance records.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, two representatives from the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to give a summary report. Inspectors took account of the responses to a parents’ questionnaire conducted by the school last year and spoke to some parents informally.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Bray, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patrick Walsh

Additional Inspector

Sue Calvert

Additional Inspector

Sue Hall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very high. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also very high.
- The school has admitted a significant number of pupils during the year. There is a relatively large group of pupils who are admitted with no prior knowledge of English, with no information on their achievement to date and sometimes with limited experience of school. Around 25 pupils who took national tests in 2013 did not start the school in Year 3.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is extra funding for pupils who are looked after by the local authority, those with a parent in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- In October 2012, the school building was damaged by an accidental fire. As a result, there was a period of significant disruption which included a period of closure, temporary arrangements for teaching (with year groups being taught on four different sites) and a move to the present temporary accommodation in January 2013. Asbestos contamination resulting from the fire meant having to destroy almost all of the school's resources. At the time of the inspection, the school was situated in a block of temporary classrooms on the site of another local school. Facilities were extremely limited and access to play and sports areas were significantly reduced. The school is due to move back to its original rebuilt site in the summer term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that a higher proportion of teaching is good or better by making sure that:
 - teachers use assessment information accurately to plan activities that are at the right level of difficulty for pupils, build on what they already know and maintain their interest and enthusiasm
 - the work of teaching assistants is always planned effectively enough so that they help pupils to learn effectively.
- Improve achievement, especially in English, so that pupils consistently make good progress from their different starting points by:
 - increasing further progress in English for those pupils who have not caught up with where they should be, especially in Years 5 and 6
 - developing the skills and confidence of staff in using the school's new systems to monitor the progress of pupils
 - ensuring that teachers check with each other more carefully how accurate their assessments are.
- Improve the capacity and skills of subject leaders so that they can help pupils make better progress by:
 - planning further training to support them, and ensuring their work is regularly checked

- ensuring that they fully understand the school’s expectations for progress and are effective in supporting and challenging teachers to achieve this.

An external review of governance and of the school’s use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Given pupils' starting points, the standards they reach are not high enough. In 2013, pupils' attainment was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. They did not make good progress from their different starting points in Year 3.
- The school's current data indicates that progress and attainment for Year 6 pupils is set to improve. This view is confirmed by the improved quality of work in pupils' books. Despite this, progress is still not yet good because not enough pupils are making better than expected progress and pupils in Years 5 and 6 still have further to go to catch up on lost ground from previous years when they made insufficient progress.
- The school has a range of systems in place to support pupils who struggle with aspects of literacy. The school has made arrangements to ensure that those pupils who arrive during the school year, often with no prior experience of English, are quickly inducted into the school and receive the support they need. The teacher with this responsibility has limited time to carry out the role but is supported by a teaching assistant.
- Although not all pupils have made expected progress, many have. The proportion of pupils who have made better than expected progress is still too low.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able pupils, are making similar progress. Teachers often plan work which is suitably challenging for more-able pupils but this is not always the case, especially in English.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium are making the same progress as other pupils. In Year 6 in 2013, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were around a term behind their classmates in mathematics but they were a term ahead of them in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those pupils supported through school action, action plus or with statement of special educational needs, are making progress at a similar rate to other groups in the school.
- A new set of resources has been introduced to support teaching in English and mathematics. This is resulting in a more consistent approach by teachers and is currently leading to better progress in all years. Most pupils are competent in their number skills.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because pupils have not made good progress over time. Although there are improvements in teaching, current data shows that progress is not yet good. During the inspection, too many of the lessons seen required improvement and none were outstanding.
- In some lessons, teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of what pupils already know and what they need to learn next. This results in lessons where activities are not challenging enough, or where pupils do not move on to new learning quickly enough. In these lessons, some pupils lose interest in learning and do not make enough effort.

- Teachers are not always planning the work of teaching assistants effectively. Although there are examples where teaching assistants have a good understanding of what their role is in supporting learning, there are too many cases where they try to give general support but with too little effect. Teachers with responsibilities have not done enough to ensure that the work of teaching assistants is effective in all lessons.
- Teachers mark work regularly and consistently and use positive comments and praise. In a few cases, there is insufficient feedback to help pupils to improve their work. Teachers do not ensure that pupils respond to the feedback they are given by re-doing work or by making the necessary corrections.
- In some lessons, pupils make good progress. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were organised well into groups, with tasks that were challenging and appropriate to their understanding. They were encouraged to check their understanding by discussing questions posed by the teacher. The lesson was paced well so that there was a good balance between pupils practising concepts they understood and introducing new ideas. The teacher created a calm and purposeful atmosphere that kept all the pupils focused and interested in their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. In a few lessons, where the teaching is less effective, some pupils are not able to maintain their enthusiasm for learning and, as a result, they make slower progress.
- Attendance last year was below average. The school has worked hard to address this. As a result, attendance has improved and is currently average.
- There is no disruptive behaviour in lessons. School records and the views of parents and pupils confirm the picture seen during the inspection of pupils who are courteous and who comply with the school's code of conduct.
- Pupils have responded remarkably well to the changes they have encountered due to the fire at the school. This has resulted in them moving to different sites for several weeks and coping with a temporary school building. It has resulted in very limited opportunities to play outside and a lack of facilities to use.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents, staff and pupils believe the school is a safe place to be.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that they do not experience racism, bullying or name calling. They feel confident that if they did, the school would deal with it effectively.
- The parents' questionnaires carried out by the school show that parents have confidence in the care and safety the school provides for their children.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has led the school through a period of significant turbulence and change caused by the fire, the need to relocate the school and the loss of all its resources. Standards have fallen and progress has not been good. The school is aware of this and the senior leaders

are taking action which is leading to improvements in achievement. Despite this, progress is still too inconsistent across year groups and is not good enough.

- The performance of teachers is checked regularly. Training is provided and this has had a positive impact on improving progress in literacy and numeracy across the school. Staff questionnaires show they have confidence in the school and its leaders. However, the quality of teaching is still not good enough and some staff with specific responsibilities are not doing enough to improve it.
- The school has introduced a new system to check on pupils' progress. Teaching staff, including those with extra responsibilities, are not confident enough in how to make effective use of the information that the system provides.
- Some assessment data is not accurate enough. Leaders have identified this as a priority and, as a result, teachers are working together more regularly to check the quality of work that pupils produce.
- Some staff, including those with specific responsibilities, need more training to feel confident in their roles and others require greater support and challenge to help them to be more effective.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well by the school. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to learn about a variety of issues and pupils respond with interest and enthusiasm. During the inspection, one group were considering the topic of rationing during the Second World War and were intrigued at the quantity and types of food that were available.
- There is a good range of trips and activities to support learning. The school celebrates and uses the rich cultural diversity of the local community and the pupils. This ensures a high level of tolerance and respect among pupils.
- The primary school sports funding has not been used due to the temporary accommodation and lack of facilities available. The school has planned how the funding will be used when they move back to their main site in the summer term.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted across the school. Leaders evaluate pupils' progress to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as each other, but achievement is still too low. The school works effectively with outside agencies and this helps to make a difference to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- The local authority provides appropriate support for the school by assessing its current progress and priorities and adjusting its contact with the school as required. The local authority has supported the school well in coping with the fire and the temporary arrangements needed to provide appropriate education. The support of a local headteacher has been arranged by the local authority and plans are being put in place to ensure that this support is used effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Over time, the governing body has not done enough to challenge school leaders and hold them to account. The new Chair of the Governing Body has made some significant changes, including carrying out an audit of the skills available to the governing body. Governors are aware of the need to be clear about how well the school is doing and understand that current performance is not good. Governors have undertaken training but still lack sufficiently detailed information on teaching and achievement, or the skills and confidence to challenge leaders

effectively. Governors are aware of the need to be more involved in the management of teachers' performance, including in ensuring that pay rises are tied to pupils' progress. Statutory duties for safeguarding are fulfilled by the governing body, although the school website does not contain all the information it should. The governors are aware of how much pupil premium funding is received but have not evaluated sufficiently the impact of this funding on the progress of eligible pupils.

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	120003
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	431207

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shital Pau
Headteacher	Joy Denning
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2009
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