

# King's Ford Junior School

Gloucester Avenue, Shrub End, Colchester, CO2 9AZ

## Inspection dates

13–14 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
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 has serious weaknesses.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. For several years, standards have been well below national levels. In parts of the school, pupils are making slow progress in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' spelling is sometimes careless. Their work is poorly presented. These were identified as weaknesses at the last inspection. Leaders and managers have not done enough to bring about improvement.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of writing and mathematics mean that pupils do not make enough progress.
- Occasionally there are incidents of pushing on the playground and a few pupils feel anxious about this.
- Teachers do not cover all the work they should, leading to gaps in pupils' learning.
- Assessment information provided to governors is too complex. This makes it hard for them to see clearly how well the school is doing.

### The school has the following strengths

- Teaching in Year 6 is good. Pupils in this year group make good progress from their different starting points.
- Older pupils are making good progress in reading.
- The headteacher and her staff have made significant improvements, including pupils' behaviour and manners. Successful steps have been taken to improve teachers' management of behaviour.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons (nine of these jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher), two assemblies and the breakfast club.
- Pupils were observed as they moved round the school, on the playground and in the dining hall.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, (who is also the special educational needs coordinator), subject leaders for English and mathematics, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated the quality and range of pupils' work and the effectiveness of teachers' marking.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading.
- Pupils were asked their views of the school, both in a group and informally.
- The views of 10 parents who responded to the Parent View online survey were taken into account, as well as those of 11 parents during brief face-to-face discussions.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documentation. This included teachers' assessments, test results, the school's self-evaluation, the improvement plan, and information on the school's website.

## Inspection team

David Rosenthal, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Ladner

Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.*

### Information about this school

- The school is of below-average size for its type.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action (extra help provided by the school) is above average. The proportion supported by school action plus (extra help also involving outside agencies) or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care, and those with a parent in the armed services) is well above average.
- A high number of pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal ages of seven and 11.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils before school each morning.
- In 2013, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve teaching by:
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - ensuring that pupils develop better writing skills and cover the full range of mathematics required
  - ensuring that pupils present their work neatly, using well-formed handwriting and accurate spelling
  - ensuring that younger pupils can use letter sounds confidently in order to improve their writing and spelling.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - providing governors with straightforward assessment information so that they can compare pupils' achievement with the national picture
  - providing guidance on what is to be taught in each subject, and monitoring the curriculum more effectively
  - providing training to raise teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of the work pupils should produce in each subject
  - taking steps to improve occasional incidents of misbehaviour on the playground.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- For several years, pupils have not achieved as much as they should, particularly in reading and writing. The proportions making expected progress and greater than expected progress have been well below national rates.
- Many pupils now in the school have significant gaps in their knowledge and skills. A large number write untidily. A majority do not form their letters well and few join their writing. Spelling is often weak. The youngest pupils have an inadequate understanding of the way to use letter sounds in spelling and reading. The school has not overcome these issues sufficiently. This stands in the way of some of the younger pupils making sufficient progress.
- Although pupils' achievement remains inadequate, there are a number of indications that achievement is improving as a result of action taken by the school's leaders. In many parts of the school, pupils' reading is improving well and standards are rising. Regular testing by the school shows that increased levels of support are having a positive impact.
- The current Year 6 pupils are doing much better than other year groups. Since they joined the school, these pupils have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. A good number of pupils are reaching high standards as a result of particularly good teaching in their current class. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education because the teaching they receive challenges the more able and effectively fills any gaps in pupils' learning.
- In the past, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have made inadequate progress. More recently, these pupils have done better as a result of the well-organised help they receive.
- In 2013, pupils in Year 6 eligible for the pupil premium were, on average, over a term behind other pupils their classmates in mathematics and about a term behind in reading; they were at a similar level to the other pupils in writing.
- More-able pupils, pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs now often make better progress from their starting points than others in the school. However, in most year groups, the overall progress of these groups is hampered by a restricted range of work and limited opportunities to practise writing and mathematics. As a result, their overall achievement is inadequate.
- Many pupils express themselves well when answering questions in class.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Poor teaching has led to low levels of achievement and slow progress for many pupils.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality, quantity and presentation of pupils' writing are too low. The teaching of handwriting is ineffective. In mathematics, some aspects of the work pupils should cover have been given little or no attention. Pupils, therefore, learn much less than they might.
- Some pupils find it hard to work without frequent support and attention because teachers expect

too little of them. As a result, work of any length is rarely completed.

- Teachers' marking of pupils' work sometimes leads to improvement; for instance, when pupils are required to improve the words they use in their writing. Not all teachers ensure this happens. Overall assessments of pupils' achievement are inaccurate because teachers do not cover the full range of work which should be taught.
- Some teaching is currently good and effective, particularly in Year 6. Here, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The lively mix of enjoyable activities, clear explanations and work that stretches pupils moves their learning on quickly.
- The teaching of reading is now effective in most year groups. The school's regular programme of assessment shows achievement in this key skill is improving. The school provides good levels of support and encouragement for pupils to read often, sometimes using volunteers from the local community to work with individuals. However, Year 3 pupils have weak knowledge of the sounds letters make. The teaching organised to overcome these difficulties has been ineffective.
- Teachers and other adults provide good support to less-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Individual difficulties are spotted and overcome through good questioning, extra explanation and well-focused extra help. Work is set to stretch the more able.
- Teachers have good relationships with their pupils. As a result, pupils generally show interest in their work and carry out instructions willingly.
- Homework, such as reading practice, supports learning well, as does the learning of spellings in some classes. However, in some cases, pupils practise incorrect spellings, writing them out repeatedly, and so learn the words wrongly.

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

### **requires improvement**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Occasionally, there is misbehaviour on the playground which upsets a few pupils.
- In lessons, pupils' attitudes are often good. They usually respond well to instructions and show interest, particularly when they are able to join in with discussions and practical activities. In contrast, a few pupils do not maintain concentration well enough when they not getting attention from an adult.
- Pupils generally take a pride in their school, looking after equipment and books with care. They do not have the same pride in their written work because they have not been taught to present it well enough.
- Around the school, pupils are polite, friendly and behave well. They have good manners towards adults and each other.
- Behaviour has improved significantly over the last few years. Staff, governors and others report that this is substantially a result of the headteacher's work. They say that this has changed the atmosphere of the school for the better.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. There are a few

recorded incidents of bullying and name calling. The school takes appropriate action to stop and prevent bullying. For instance, during an annual anti-bullying week, pupils learned about different types of bullying and how to get help if they need it. In other respects, pupils say they feel safe. Good care is taken to ensure their safety; for instance, when they go on trips. Staff are trained to recognise and report any safeguarding concerns.

## **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- The weaknesses identified in the inspection report published in 2012 have not been addressed completely. Weaknesses in teaching, as well as pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation remain. As a result, pupils' achievement has not improved enough.
- The school's self-evaluation fails to identify sharply enough the low achievement of its pupils. Insufficient attention has been given by leaders and governors to making improvements.
- The school's leaders, and notably the headteacher, have, however, made some important improvements. Many people, both from within the school and outside it, speak warmly of the improvements to behaviour. Part of this work has involved improving teachers' skills in managing pupils' behaviour.
- The subject leader for mathematics has begun to improve the teaching of the subject by setting out the work to be covered in the new National Curriculum, which is beginning to be introduced. This has been agreed with the neighbouring infant school in order to ensure continuity in future as pupils transfer between the schools. Work in identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding is partly responsible for the improvements to achievement in Year 6.
- An effective and experienced leader has been appointed to oversee the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The needs of these pupils are now being identified clearly and well-focused programmes are provided to help address them. These pupils are starting to make better progress in this school year than in the past.
- There are arrangements to hold teachers to account for the progress of their pupils. This is not as effective as it should be because of shortcomings in the assessments on which these judgements are based. However, action has been taken to eradicate teaching which is inadequate.
- The school's curriculum contains activities which pupils enjoy and from which they learn. However, leaders have not monitored what is taught in each subject and in each year group. This lack of structure has resulted in gaps in pupils' learning. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to practise what has been learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects.
- After-school activities in sport, art and music are broad, varied and popular. The primary school sports funding is used to provide opportunities for the more able to participate and succeed in competitions and demanding activities.
- The good relationships between staff and pupils, and the varied activities offered, provide a good basis for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school encourages parents to get involved in their children's education. For example, some parents help with pupils' homework. Those who responded to Parent View were generally positive about the school.

- The breakfast club, which operates daily during term time, provides food, childcare and social development opportunities for pupils as they make friends and help with the various chores associated with the meal.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Vulnerable pupils are well known to staff. Staff discuss pupils' different needs regularly and keep appropriate records of actions taken to meet them.
- The local authority knows the school well. It has now responded to the issue of past underachievement. It has set up a monitoring board to discuss the effectiveness of improvement strategies.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Until recently, governors have failed to hold school leaders to account for pupils' underachievement. The assessment information that governors have received has been too complicated and has prevented them from gaining a clear enough understanding of how well pupils are doing across the school. In the past, governors have not evaluated the impact of pupil premium funding. They are now becoming more effective, with support from the local authority. Governors check on the progress of individual pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They also monitor the effectiveness of the new primary sports funding to ensure that it enables more-able pupils to participate in activities which challenge them. Governors bring good levels of expertise to their work, based on their varied professional experience. They consider the information made available to them before awarding any pay rises; they deal with inadequate performance decisively.

## 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>	114716
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	430739

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>	164
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bruce Tuxford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Wallace
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 June 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 573807
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