

Hartford Community Junior School

Mayfield Crescent, Huntingdon, PE29 1UL

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- In 2013, many pupils underachieved in the Year 6 national tests, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils across all year groups and subjects do not consistently make good progress.
- Pupils who are supported by additional funding are not making as much progress in mathematics as they are in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not always make as much progress as other pupils in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Teaching has not been consistently good. Sometimes, teachers and teaching assistants do not insist that pupils complete as much work as they are capable of in the time allocated.
- Work is not always hard enough for the most-able pupils.
- Teachers' marking is not as helpful as it should be in guiding pupils to improve their work.
- Leaders do not check precisely enough how well teaching helps some groups of pupils to make more rapid progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving strongly because more teaching is good. As a result, many pupils are currently making good progress, particularly in reading.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite, well mannered and courteous. The school ensures that pupils are safe and that they have a good understanding of safety-related issues.
- Leaders are successfully making strong improvements to teaching and achievement. They make sure that behaviour and safety are good.
- The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school. Governors know the school well and are successfully influencing improvements in achievement and teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons, six of which were jointly observed with one of the senior leaders. The inspection team also made several short visits to other lessons to check on the progress and behaviour of different groups of pupils.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils from all year groups. Other meetings were held with members of the governing body and with senior leaders and staff. The lead inspector held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 29 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also analysed returns to a questionnaire that the school uses and spoke to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including those relating to the monitoring of teaching and the targets set for teachers to improve their work. They also looked at records relating to: attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding. In addition, they examined the school's improvement plan and data on pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Richard Sutton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Renee Robinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of similar size to others of its type.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who have ethnic minority heritages is below average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium, which is additional funding given to schools for pupils in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The acting headteacher has been in post since January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and thereby raise achievement for all groups of pupils, particularly in mathematics, by making sure that:
 - marking always gives pupils guidance on how they can improve their work and regularly checking that teachers' advice has been acted upon
 - teachers and teaching assistants always have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and insist that pupils complete work in the time given
 - work is always hard enough, particularly for the most-able pupils.
- Increase the rate of progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in writing and mathematics, and of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium in mathematics, by:
 - checking rigorously how well teaching helps all groups of pupils to make more rapid progress
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing and mathematical skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In recent years, attainment by the end of Year 6 has not been higher than average because pupils have not made consistently good progress. In 2013, the proportion of pupils who made the progress expected of them in reading and writing was average. However, too few pupils made sufficient progress in mathematics.
- The progress that many groups of pupils have made across subjects and year groups has been too variable, including that of pupils from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language. However, many of these pupils are now making better progress than they have in the past because teaching is improving.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics has not been good enough. In particular, pupils who are supported by additional funding (pupil premium) have not always achieved as well as other pupils in this subject. Achievement in mathematics has not been improving as quickly as it has in reading and writing. However, since the start of this year, it is improving strongly for all groups of pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not consistently make good progress across year groups in writing and mathematics. This is because teachers and teaching assistants do not regularly make sure that these pupils complete as much work as they are capable in the time allocated. However, achievement for these pupils is improving and in some year groups pupils are making rapid progress.
- The most-able pupils do not always achieve well because work provided does not consistently demand enough of them.
- Achievement is improving and, currently, more pupils are making good and, sometimes rapid progress, particularly in reading. Accurate assessments of pupils' work in Year 6 indicate that they are making much better progress in all subjects. Their attainment is on track to be considerably higher than that of recent years.
- In 2013, Year 6 pupils supported through the pupil premium achieved, on average, levels in reading which were one term behind those of other pupils, two terms behind in writing and similar to those of other pupils in mathematics. The progress of pupils currently in the school is improving in all subjects and more are making good progress. Extra support is helpful to these pupils. For example, the school spends additional funding to provide extra staff to give some pupils one-to-one support. The school's own data indicate that gaps in achievement are narrowing significantly. However, progress in mathematics is not quite as fast as in reading and writing.
- The school has used the additional primary sport funding effectively. For example, it has purchased new equipment and trained teachers. Pupils are having more opportunities to take part in a wider range of competitive sports. The school is also using this funding to help pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of a healthy life-style and physical well-being. As a result, their skills are developing well.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Sometimes, teachers' marking does not give pupils clear advice on how they can improve their work. When advice is given, teachers do not regularly check that pupils have acted on the improvements required. This means that some pupils make slower progress than they could do. However, teachers identify any spelling mistakes that pupils make, and they almost always make sure that pupils make corrections when necessary. As a result, spelling is improving across the school.
- The progress that pupils make is not always as rapid as it should be because teachers and teaching assistants do not consistently insist on pupils completing as much work as they could in the time allocated.
- Teachers usually make clear to pupils what they are going to learn. However, work provided is not always demanding enough for the most-able pupils. This means that these pupils are not stretched and challenged to think and work hard enough.
- Teaching is improving strongly in all year groups, which is why many more pupils are making good progress. Teachers very effectively motivate pupils to work hard and do their best.
- Mathematics teaching has not been good in the past because teaching has not always helped pupils to understand mathematical ideas well enough. Some have been left confused and unable to apply what they should have learned earlier to new work. However, the teaching of mathematics, as well as reading and writing, has improved considerably this year and, as a result, achievement is rising.
- Teaching assistants usually make a good contribution to the progress of pupils who they work with because they have received good training and support. Many use questions effectively to encourage pupils to think hard. However, at times, they do not accurately judge the speed at which pupils should be working to complete work set and this sometimes means that pupils' progress is not fast enough.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is improving in all subjects. Teaching assistants have received good training which is increasingly helping these pupils to make good progress. Teachers are more often making sure that work is appropriately challenging for pupils.
- Teaching for pupils supported by additional funding (pupil premium) in reading, writing and mathematics is also improving. This is because leaders have ensured that teachers provide additional support to help them catch up with their classmates.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The vast majority are polite, courteous and well mannered. Pupils recognise that behaviour has improved this year. However, although extremely rare, these standards occasionally slip at lunch time.
- The vast majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils predominantly work hard, try their best and show determination to do well. They value the rewards that have been introduced this year for good work and trying hard. This helps them to behave well.

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school fulfils statutory responsibilities regarding safeguarding: all staff have been checked as required and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. Pupils have a good understanding of safety-related issues including how to keep safe when working online.
- Bullying is rare at the school and as a result, pupils feel safe. Pupils have a good understanding of the various forms in which bullying can occur and they are confident that when bullying incidents do happen, staff will deal with matters quickly and effectively.
- The school has successfully improved attendance and most pupils attend school regularly and on time.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good because leaders are demonstrating a strong ability to effectively improve teaching, achievement and behaviour and safety. Many of these improvements have taken place during the current academic year.
- Leaders, including the acting headteacher and acting assistant headteachers who lead literacy and numeracy, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the school improvement plan is well focused on the most important areas for improvement and progress towards achieving objectives is regularly checked.
- Leaders provide teachers with effective support and training to help them develop their skills. For example, they are making sure mathematics teaching is improving quickly by enabling teachers to work with a specialist mathematics coach.
- Targets set for teachers to help them improve their work and guide decisions about pay increases are helpful and are making a positive contribution to the improvements in teaching and achievement.
- A key reason why the school is improving strongly is because leaders apply improved systems for checking the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement. Although leaders are ensuring that through effective training, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium support are making better progress than in previous years, they are not making consistently good progress. Checks on how well these groups of pupils are doing are not as rigorous as they could be.
- A broad range of learning opportunities encourages pupils' positive attitudes to their work and promotes their personal development. Visits to theatres and places of worship as well as a wide range of sporting activities provide well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils are able to develop and practise their writing and mathematical skills in subjects other than in English and mathematics.
- The local authority has provided an appropriate level of challenge and support to the school, which has contributed to the improvements in teaching and achievement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have the skills required to analyse and interpret data on pupils' achievement
- Governors provide strong support to the school and hold leaders to account for its performance. As a result, the governing body is influential in making sure that the school is improving
- The governing body knows how the additional pupil premium and primary sport funding is used. It checks the impact that these funds are having on eligible pupils. Consequently, the governing body is aware of the improvements to the physical education and sport curriculum. It is successfully ensuring that the achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well as pupils supported by the pupil premium is improving
- Governors know what the quality of teaching is and ensure effective management of staff performance. They are involved in all decisions about whether teachers should receive pay rises in relation to meeting targets relating to pupils' progress. They know how staff underperformance is tackled and have appropriate procedures in place should this be necessary.

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	110696
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	441988

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	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Padrica Kennington
Headteacher	Sue Wright (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2012
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