

Clowne Junior School

King Street, Clowne, Chesterfield, S43 4BS

Inspection dates 3–4 June 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		Good	2
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

- Progress in writing is not fast enough and progress in mathematics varies from year to year.
- Too few pupils, particularly those of middle ability and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, make rapid progress across a range of subjects.
- Teaching over time is not consistently good or better. Activities are too easy and do not allow pupils to make accelerated progress.
- Marking does not always have an impact on improving pupils' work.
- Subject leaders do not monitor their areas of responsibility closely enough in order to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and progress in the school.
- The governing body does not hold the headteacher to close account in order to secure improvements in teaching and progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Achievement in reading is strong and pupils make good progress in this area.
- Pupils enjoy school, behave well and feel safe.
- Parents are extremely positive about the work of the school.
- A wide range of activities, theme weeks, trips and residential visits develop the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and brings variety and enjoyment to their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 parts of lessons, one of which was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors also listened to pupils read, looked at their work and observed behaviour at the start of the day, during break time and at lunchtime.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher; other members of staff; four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body; a representative of the local authority; pupils and parents.
- Inspectors looked at policies, self-evaluation and development planning documents, monitoring records related to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, information about pupils' progress and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Responses from 27 parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 26 returns of the staff questionnaire were taken into account.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynda Townsend

Additional Inspector

Mark Cordell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than average for its type.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and, of the small number from minority ethnic heritage, very few speak English as an additional language.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported by school action is above average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to accelerate progress, to close the gap particularly for middle ability pupils and those supported by pupil premium, by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan activities at a suitable level of difficulty so that lessons match the abilities of the full range of pupils and provide suitable challenge
 - providing pupils with feedback which gives them clear guidance on how they can improve their work and ensuring that they act upon this advice
 - developing strategies for pupils to further develop their writing skills in a range of subjects
 - extending opportunities for teachers to learn from the good practice which exists in the school.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - extending the role and influence of subject leaders so that they can improve the quality of teaching and progress in the school
 - ensuring that governors undertake appropriate training so that the governing body is able to form an independent view of the school's effectiveness in order to hold the headteacher to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved. An external review of 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

requires improvement

- Pupils join the school with attainment that is above average, and attainment at the end of Year 6 has been above average in reading since the last inspection. However, attainment in mathematics has not been good for all groups of pupils and attainment in writing was below the national average in 2011. Attainment in writing was similar to the national figure in 2012 and 2013; evidence provided by the school's own data on pupils' achievement, observations of pupils' learning and the quality of work in their books indicate that this standard has been maintained.
- The results of the spelling, grammar and punctuation tests in 2013 were similar to the national average and the school has taken concerted action, particularly with spelling, to improve this aspect of pupils' writing skills.
- A large majority of pupils make the progress that is expected of them. Progress is not as strong in writing as it is in reading and mathematics, and a smaller proportion than the national average make accelerated progress in writing and mathematics. The progress of middle-ability pupils does not match that of other pupils.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils in the school. However, as a result of small-group work and carefully planned activities, some pupils who are supported by a statement of special educational needs make rapid progress.
- In reading, a greater proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium make the progress that is expected of them than their classmates. However, fewer make rapid progress in mathematics and writing so their attainment overall is two terms behind their peers. The gap is a year in mathematics, six months in writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling, and a term in reading.
- Pupils enjoy reading, and achievement in reading is strong. Almost all pupils make the progress that is expected of them and greater proportions than the national average make accelerated progress. Consequently, attainment in reading is above average.
- Achievement and the quality of work in subjects other than English and mathematics does not always match that produced in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time is not consistently good enough to ensure rapid progress to enable all pupils, particular the middle-ability pupils and those supported by the pupil premium, to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Work is not always appropriate to the capabilities of the pupils. At times, it is not broken down into a defined order of steps to allow the least able to access it. Often it does not challenge pupils sufficiently, so they find the activities too easy. A great deal of time is spent consolidating learning rather than moving pupils on to work that will accelerate progress.
- Opportunities to ask difficult questions and probe the understanding of specific groups, including the most able, are not always taken to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress.

- Marking is inconsistent. It often reflects successes but does not extend pupils' learning by identifying clear next steps or providing opportunities for pupils to act upon any advice in order to improve further. For example, when pupils use success criteria to identify targets through peer- and self-assessment, these are not followed up in subsequent learning.
- Effective teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar and the use of individual target cards in English lessons have improved the accuracy of pupils' writing. However, learning from English lessons is not developed sufficiently in other subjects. As a result of this, the quality of writing in subjects such as science and geography is not as good as it should be.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school. Opportunities are provided for pupils to read widely and often, and staff listen to pupils read. More-able pupils read challenging books and weaker readers draw on appropriate strategies to help them work out how to read unfamiliar words and understand texts.
- Teaching assistants often lead small-group activities for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils usually make the progress expected of them in these sessions but teachers do not regularly monitor these pupils or promote rapid progress for all pupils through small-group work.
- Lessons start promptly and pupils are keen to learn. They complete appropriate homework tasks and take pride in their work. This is demonstrated by the quality of presentation, particularly in English books.
- Teaching makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils work extremely well with each other, study a range of faiths, consider what is right and wrong, and take part in musical, sporting and technological activities in lessons and outside of the classroom.
- The school has many attractive learning spaces and there are a number of interesting and thought-provoking displays which assist the pupils' learning and celebrate their successes.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils feel that other pupils behave well and all parents who expressed a view felt that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved.
- There have been no permanent exclusions and very few fixed-term exclusions over a number of years. Pupils who have experienced difficulties in other schools settle in well and the behaviour logs indicate that poor behaviour is rare and dealt with effectively. These all show that behaviour management is most effective.
- Pupils enjoy school. Attendance is above average and pupils are proud to be members of the school community. They wear the school uniform with pride and are keen to take responsibility.
- In lessons, pupils behave well; they listen carefully, follow instructions, respond positively to clearly established routines and usually complete tasks to the best of their ability. However, on a few occasions, they sit and wait for a member of staff rather than moving on to more-challenging work.

- Behaviour at break time and lunchtime is good. Pupils are often involved in purposeful activities and the atmosphere in the school dining hall is calm and friendly.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They display good manners and their conduct is considerate of others; for example, they hold doors open for other people. They have excellent relationships with the staff and each other.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Consequently, all pupils feel safe and all parents agree that this is the case. Pupils are taught to stay safe, including when using the internet, and they behave in a way that ensures that they all remain safe.
- Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils understand what it means to be unkind to someone and they are aware of different kinds of bullying. They are also confident that staff will deal quickly and effectively with any unkindness if it happens.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and staff have received appropriate training and know how to deal with any incidents if they arise. In addition to this, the school works extremely well with other agencies and families to ensure that pupils who are at the most potential risk are very well protected.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Systems and staffing have not been in place to ensure that teaching has led to rapid and sustained progress for all groups. However, the headteacher is realistic about the strengths and weaknesses in the school and has begun to address some of the areas for development.
- The school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness has been generous because leaders have not focused closely enough on the impact of teaching on accelerating progress. However, the areas for development identified by leaders are accurate and have been used to inform improvement planning. This has led to some improvements in spelling, writing, mathematics and the achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium in reading.
- In a largely open-plan learning environment, staff work well together and share ideas. However, formal arrangements to allow subject and year leaders to monitor the quality of teaching and progress are not fully developed. In addition to this, there are too few planned opportunities for the best teachers to work with others to improve teaching in the school.
- Leaders with responsibilities for subjects, and some other leaders, do not routinely use school data, the work in pupils' books and observations of lessons to judge the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They are not using all the information available to them to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- Systems to check on teachers' performance focus upon improving teaching and now make closer links with the impact of teaching on progress. Consequently, teachers' pay rises are tied to the progress their pupils make; the strongest teachers are rewarded and further support or challenge is given to those teachers who need it.
- The curriculum promotes good behaviour, physical well-being and a clear understanding of safety matters. It covers an appropriate range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, sporting and technical achievement, particularly in computing. The curriculum is enriched by a host of trips, residential visits and theme weeks, and provides many opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The school has used primary sports funding to increase participation in physical activity and sport and to promote healthy lifestyles and physical well-being for all pupils. For example, staff have had additional training, specialist sports coaches have been employed, regular physical activity now takes place before school, partnership working has been developed with a number of local sports clubs and talented athletes and swimmers have been given the opportunity to develop their skills further.
- The school works very closely with parents. All parents who responded to Parent View would recommend the school. The parents who spoke to inspectors were extremely positive about the school; they particularly praised communication, the care provided by the school and the behaviour of the pupils.
- The most recent local authority report shows a clear understanding of the school's areas for development and indicates action that the school need to take to improve things further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body have a wide range of skills and experience from outside of education. However, they have not attended any recent training and make infrequent visits to the school so they are too reliant on what the headteacher tells them. Consequently, they are unable to closely scrutinise information about the school in order to challenge the headteacher and drive improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. They have too limited a role in school improvement planning.
 - Governing body minutes record outcomes of discussions and reflect that governors look at the relevant areas in meetings. However, meetings are not always well attended and there is little evidence of holding the headteacher to account for improving standards.
 - Some governors have some knowledge of school data and what it tells them but they rely on the headteacher to analyse the information it highlights. They are aware of pupil premium funding but are unclear on its impact. They have a very limited awareness of primary sports funding. In other areas, though, they ensure that the school's finances are properly managed.
 - Governors have used the local authority link officer to advise them when they managed the headteacher's performance. They set relevant targets for the headteacher, which are linked to the school improvement plan, and they are aware how the performance of teachers is managed.

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	112532
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	444090

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	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Buckingham
Headteacher	Martin Edge
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2010
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