

# Catherine Junior School

Brandon Street, Leicester LE4 6AZ

## Inspection dates

8–9 March 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Although leaders are improving the quality of teaching, it is not yet consistently good.
- At times when evaluating teaching, leaders do not focus enough on the learning of specific groups of pupils.
- There is some variation in how well teachers pitch work to the range of ability in the class, including for the most-able pupils, who do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- On occasions, teachers do not check pupils' understanding effectively by allowing pupils to explain their reasoning and to talk about their learning.
- There is inconsistency in how much pupils write in a range of subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to apply their mathematical skills in topics and projects.
- The amount of progress pupils make varies between year groups and too few pupils make consistently good progress.
- Not all of the disadvantaged pupils make enough accelerated progress in order to catch up with their classmates.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, support staff well in improving their work. This is having a positive effect on the amount of progress pupils are now making.
- There are good systems to check how well each pupil is doing.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to learn. The school's work to keep pupils safe is effective.
- Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together. The school celebrates its rich cultural mix and promotes pupils' personal and social development well.
- Pupils who are new to English make good progress in learning to speak English because they are taught well.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils by making sure that teachers consistently:
  - match work well to the range of ability in the class so that pupils make good progress
  - give pupils enough opportunity to explain their reasoning and demonstrate their understanding
  - expect pupils to write more extensively in a range of subjects
  - provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge and skills across different subjects.
  
- Strengthen leadership and management by evaluating more precisely how well teachers promote the learning of groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged and the most-able pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders have maintained a focus on improving teaching and outcomes for pupils during a time of staff changes at the school. They have high expectations of what pupils and staff should achieve. Staff qualities are recognised and developed well and weaker areas of teaching are tackled. As a result, teaching is improving strongly.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and a strong leadership team, sets realistic targets and key priorities. Leaders, including those responsible for subjects, check the effectiveness of what they do and introduce new approaches to aid improvement. For example, the teaching of mathematics has been reorganised and a new approach to the teaching of reading and writing implemented. These changes are having a positive effect on pupils' enjoyment and progress.
- Leaders make sure that staff know how to improve their work and use a range of ways to check the quality of teaching. They check staff performance frequently and set targets for staff to work towards. However, at times leaders do not focus precisely enough on the effect of teaching on the learning of specific groups of pupils.
- Leaders provide opportunities for staff to develop their skills in line with the school's priorities. They enable staff to share expertise with each other and with teachers from other schools. Good support from the local authority helps the school to develop these links and to establish the new approaches to teaching.
- Leaders use effective systems to check pupils' progress and involve staff in understanding and using assessment information to speed up pupils' learning. The information is used well to decide which pupils need extra help and to evaluate the effectiveness of any extra support.
- The pupil premium spending is used effectively to aid pupils' personal development and improve attendance. This is having a positive effect on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and gaps in performance between these pupils and their peers are closing. However, leaders recognise that the progress of this group of pupils remains a key priority as it is not yet good enough throughout the school.
- The school is a purposeful place where good behaviour and positive attitudes flourish. Attractive displays show pupils that their work and efforts are valued. It is expected that pupils get on well together and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The varied cultures and backgrounds that make up the school's community are celebrated.
- Pupils learn about various faiths in lessons and during assemblies. During the inspection they commented, 'We are doing an Easter assembly at the moment but we have also celebrated Diwali, Eid and Christmas.' Pupils recognise the importance of respect and tolerance because these values are central to the school's ethos. They learn about key British institutions, events and people both past and present. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is well balanced and enriched with a range of extra-curricular activities, trips and visitors to widen pupils' experiences. For example, during the inspection pupils in Year 4 worked with an artist to express their ideas about disappearing habitats, with a positive effect on their spiritual, moral and cultural development.
- Leaders regularly review and evaluate how well the curriculum promotes learning. For example, the school's analysis shows an increase in the number of pupils taking part in extra-curricular physical activity and improving their skills as a result of the effective use of the primary sports funding.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance is effective. Since the previous inspection, governors have undergone a review of their work which has helped to hone their skills in holding the school to account. Governors analyse information about pupils' progress and ask relevant questions if pupils are not doing well enough. They know how the pupil premium spending helps to improve the attendance and achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
  - Governors visit the school regularly and participate in curriculum workshops. They undertake relevant training. They carry out the performance management of the headteacher and know how teachers are helped to improve their work.
  - Governors forge positive links with parents and the community and are actively involved in encouraging good attendance and punctuality.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders, including governors, frequently review the school's safeguarding procedures and keep themselves informed of the most recent legislation. They make sure that staff receive the training they need to keep pupils safe. The school's systems, including the vetting of adults who work with children, are thorough. Leaders use various methods to communicate with parents, including those who do not speak English, to maintain links should any concerns arise.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving strongly, it not yet consistently good across all classes and year groups. On occasions, teachers do not match work well enough to the range of ability in the class. This means that the work does not sufficiently challenge the most able to reach their full potential or help less-able pupils to fully grasp and build firmly upon basic concepts.
- Sometimes, teachers are too keen to supply the answers and do not allow pupils enough opportunity to explain their thinking or to justify their reasoning. Consequently, teachers are not certain that pupils understand.
- Although teachers expect pupils to write for a range of purposes, work in books shows that writing in other subjects is not as extensive as it is in English books. This limits the opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills and apply what they learn in English lessons.
- Teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to use mathematics widely in projects and topics, which limits pupils' use of their skills and knowledge. However, in mathematics lessons, there are some good examples of pupils applying their skills. For example, in Year 6, pupils were set the challenge of looking for patterns and finding missing numbers. Pupils did well in using what they knew about numbers to find the answers.
- The teaching of reading and writing is improving rapidly. Reading is taught regularly and consistently. Teachers share their enjoyment of reading. Popular books such as *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* inspire interest and motivate learning well. During the inspection, pupils talked keenly about a visit to a film set where the *Harry Potter* stories were filmed, helping them to compare and contrast events in the books.
- Teachers link pupils' reading well to their writing. For example, in Year 4, teachers used a text well to explore the value of loyalty and to develop pupils' skills in persuasive writing. Classroom displays are rich in language and staff expect pupils to use advanced vocabulary in their writing.
- A consistent approach to the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar means that, in most cases, pupils' spellings are accurate and their writing is well structured.
- Staff, including teaching assistants, have good relationships with pupils. They reward and praise effort. They expect good behaviour and concentration during lessons. Teachers remind pupils of the need to present their work well and pupils frequently practise their handwriting.
- Teachers are clear about what pupils should achieve by the end of lessons. With guidance from leaders, they are developing their skills in asking relevant questions well. They pick up misconceptions quickly and modify their teaching to clear up any misunderstanding. Teachers provide useful feedback, including when they mark pupils' books, so that pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils play their part in the school's smooth daily running. They take on responsibilities willingly. They are happy to be playground leaders and house captains. Pupils are very keen to gain house points and to win recognition as the 'pupil of the week'.
- Pupils say they enjoy their learning, reflected in the comment, 'I like coming to school because you get to learn about so many things, not just mathematics and English.' Pupils know how teachers help them to improve and talk keenly about their achievement in learning to speak English or developing their reading skills.
- Pupils value their friendships and like to work together in lessons and during sports activities. They gain an understanding of democracy through their work on the school council. They see the fairness of taking

it in turns to help their teachers and each other.

- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that bullying is not an issue. They understand the different forms of bullying and how to deal with any concerns that may arise because of the guidance they receive from the school. Pupils said, 'We have assemblies about online safety and "stranger danger" and bullying hardly ever happens.'

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and pay full attention. They are keen to contribute and listen well to their classmates, especially when teachers make the most of pupils' positive attitudes and engage them in talking about their learning.
- Pupils show the same level of good behaviour with a range of adults, including when they attend the breakfast and after-school clubs, where they socialise well.
- Pupils say that behaviour has improved and that there are clear rules and sanctions which everyone understands. Staff manage behaviour consistently well. The school's logs show a reduction in the number of incidents. Any that do arise are recorded and followed up.
- Attendance is average. It is improving steadily, especially for disadvantaged pupils, due to the school's efforts to reduce the number of pupils who stay away from school frequently. Staff successfully help parents to see that good attendance is linked to good learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes have a positive effect on the amount of progress they make in lessons but are not yet leading to consistently strong progress.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **require improvement**

- Outcomes require improvement because not all pupils are yet making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. There is some variation between year groups in how well pupils are doing.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2015, pupils did not reach the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Some of the pupils joined part way through the key stage and did not have enough time to catch up. Those pupils who were at the school throughout the key stage experienced some underachievement due to weaker teaching and a period in temporary accommodation. Although their progress speeded up while they were in Year 6, it was not enough to enable them to reach the expected standards.
- The effect of good leadership in improving the curriculum and the quality of teaching means that outcomes for pupils are now improving. The school's information and work in books shows that progress is speeding up and standards are rising. Pupils who are currently in Year 6, including the most able, are catching up well and are better prepared for their learning in secondary school than they have been previously.
- In 2015, not enough of the most-able pupils made the expected progress. This is now being remedied and the most-able pupils make expected progress. However, some variation remains in how well work is pitched to their ability. When they are suitably challenged, they make good progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the most-able pupils in Year 5 were set the challenge of devising their own problems to consolidate their learning about decimals, which they did well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make variable rates of progress in line with their peers. In some cases, they make good progress because of the level of support they receive but there is inconsistency in how well they are helped to understand their learning and develop their skills.
- Those pupils who arrive with little or no English are given immediate and intensive language support. As a result, they make good progress in learning to speak English and settle well. However, once they join the mainstream classes, their rates of progress are more variable. This is because there is inconsistency in how well work is matched to their ability.
- By the end of Year 6 in 2015, disadvantaged pupils made equal progress to their classmates in reading but did not make as much progress in writing and mathematics. They reached the same standards in writing and did slightly better than their classmates in reading but were two terms behind in mathematics. In all three subjects they were up to three terms behind other pupils nationally. Currently, disadvantaged pupils are making progress in line with their peers. Some are making good progress but not all are yet making the accelerated progress to catch up successfully.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120003
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10009125

This inspection 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>	477
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Shital Pau
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joy Denning
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 262 5896
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.catherine-jun.leicester.sch.uk">www.catherine-jun.leicester.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@catherine-jun.leicester.sch.uk">office@catherine-jun.leicester.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11–12 February 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest group being of Indian origin.
- A large proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. A relatively large group of pupils join the school with little or no English.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The funding is received for pupils who are, or have been, eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club which are both managed by the governing body.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant staff changes and undergone a reorganisation of management and leadership roles. The two assistant headteachers took up post in September 2014.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons, five of which were jointly observed with senior leaders, and one assembly. Inspectors also observed the teaching of small groups of pupils. In all, 19 members of staff were seen teaching.
- The inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work from all year groups, spoke to pupils about their work during lessons and listened to pupils read. An inspector observed extra-curricular activities and visited the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The inspectors held meetings with pupils, governors, leaders and staff. An inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for inspectors to analyse. However, inspectors took into account responses to a parental questionnaire conducted by the school. An inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors analysed 24 responses to the questionnaire completed by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at progress and attendance information, school improvement planning and evidence of the monitoring of teaching. They also scrutinised documentation relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Vivienne McTiffen, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Watson	Ofsted Inspector
Damien Turrell	Ofsted Inspector

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