

# Limpsfield Junior School

Jenkin Avenue, Brightside, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S9 1AN

## Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- In the last two years, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 in English and mathematics has been below average. These outcomes do not represent good progress from pupils' starting points, particularly for disadvantaged and lower-ability pupils.
- Despite some improvement, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across year groups and subjects. Pupils' progress is still not consistently good.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is not accurately assessed and teaching requires improvement. Opportunities for pupils to write across the wider curriculum are too limited. There is not enough focus on developing pupils' English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills to a good standard.
- Achievement in reading has recently improved. However, lower-ability pupils are still not effectively supported in reading, or in writing.
- Leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and work for pupils of varying abilities lacks challenge. When this happens, a few pupils become disruptive in lessons.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils lags some way behind that of others in the school and nationally. This gap is not closing quickly enough. Leaders and governors do not ensure that the pupil premium funding is used to good effect.
- Leaders' improvement plans lack the precision needed to move school forward rapidly. They have not yet established an effective way of evaluating pupils' progress.
- Leaders, including middle leaders and governors, do not check the impact of their actions thoroughly enough. Governors do not hold leaders effectively to account.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have embedded a culture where each pupil is valued as an individual. Consequently, relationships between pupils and adults are strong, pupils' self-esteem is high and most pupils behave well.
- Teaching in mathematics is effective and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
- Leaders have dramatically reduced the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent. This is now below average.
- A rich diet of first-hand experiences and visits enhances pupils' learning, broadens their views and raises their aspirations.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective.

## Full report

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

- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good and pupils make good progress, by ensuring that:
  - expectations of pupils are consistently high and pupils of all abilities are effectively challenged to produce work of a good standard across the subjects
  - pupils' achievement in writing is accurately assessed and this is used to plan work that meets pupils' varying needs
  - pupils are given more opportunities to write across the curriculum subjects
  - lower-ability pupils are given more opportunities to read to an adult and to write at length
  - a stronger emphasis is placed on developing pupils' English grammar, punctuation and spelling skills
  - the skills of teaching assistants are further developed so that they consistently make a positive contribution to pupils' learning
  - low-level disruption in lessons is eliminated.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - eliminating inconsistencies in quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good
  - ensuring that plans for improving the school are linked precisely to gains in pupils' outcomes
  - establishing an effective system for assessing pupils' progress so that leaders, governors and teachers can evaluate pupils' progress accurately
  - developing further the skills of middle leaders so that they can contribute to school improvement effectively
  - strengthening systems to review and set targets for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that provision meets their particular needs
  - ensuring that the pupil premium is used to good effect so that the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others closes quickly
  - strengthening governance so that leaders are effectively held to account.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders know the school well and are accurate in identifying weaknesses in teaching and learning. However, leaders' efforts to eliminate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have not taken effect quickly enough. Pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders identify appropriate priorities for improvement. However, their planning lacks the essential detail and information required to strengthen the school's performance rapidly. This absence of precision means that leaders, including governors, are unable to check on the impact of their initiatives reliably. Therefore, their effectiveness is not maximised.
- Leaders are developing the school's assessment system. They now have access to increasingly accurate information about pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics. It is too soon to tell if leaders, governors and staff can use this information to ensure that all pupils perform to their full potential across subjects.
- The development of middle leaders' skills has been a priority for the school. Following support from an external school improvement partner, many middle leaders now demonstrate strong subject knowledge and are involved in checking on their areas of responsibility. However, their evaluations do not centre sharply enough on gauging the difference their actions are making to pupils' learning. Therefore, their impact on increasing pupils' progress is limited.
- Leaders have been successful in improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. They have also ensured that disadvantaged pupils access a wide range of valuable experiences, from 'Zumba' classes to camping trips. However, inconsistencies in teaching, learning and assessment mean that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils lag considerably behind others in the school and nationally. The pupil premium funding is not being used to good effect and the wide gaps in outcomes are not closing quickly.
- The firm links that the special educational needs coordinator has built with the local infant and high schools have been crucial in ensuring a smooth continuity of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Although this is encouraging, the school's system of setting and reviewing targets for this group of pupils lacks the rigour necessary to ensure that pupils receive high-quality, focused teaching. As a result, their progress is variable across year groups and subjects.
- Leaders use the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding to provide a variety of opportunities for pupils. For example, the appointment of play leaders has been successful in ensuring that pupils enjoy active lunch times. Specialist coaches are involved in delivering high-quality PE lessons and professional development for staff. While this is positive, leaders do not evaluate the effect these actions have on pupils' participation rates thoroughly. Therefore, leaders cannot be certain that the funding is having the impact they desire.
- Leaders have been successful in improving attendance and dramatically reducing the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent. Leaders have tracked improvements in this area meticulously. As a result, they have targeted support and challenge for the

pupils and families who most need it. Incentives for high attendance are in place but leaders are clear in their view that the secret to their success is that 'pupils just love coming to the school'.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Leaders ensure that the culturally diverse nature of the school's population is celebrated and used as a learning resource. For example, pupils talk keenly about the religious education (RE) day, when the imam visited and led the call to prayer. Pupils have a wealth of opportunity to express themselves artistically and musically. The school's choir has a substantial and enthusiastic membership, which regularly performs in the community. In a recent art project, pupils benefited from studying Sheffield's architecture, creating artwork using a variety of media and presenting this to parents and the public in a gallery.
- Leaders have placed a clear emphasis on creating an ethos which fosters strong relationships between school staff, pupils and their families. As a result, staff know the pupils and their individual interests well. Leaders and staff celebrate pupils' wider achievements and, therefore, strengthen pupils' self-esteem. In prioritising pupils' well-being, leaders have been successful in developing confident, reflective learners.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have recently commissioned an external review of the effectiveness of their work. This has resulted in changes to the membership and responsibilities held on the governing body. Governors are acting on the recommendations made in the review. However, it is too early to assess their impact on strengthening the school's performance.
- Governors show a secure understanding of the school's priorities and the actions being taken to tackle these. However, they are overly generous in their evaluations of pupils' achievement. Additionally, leaders do not provide governors with suitable information to enable them to hold leaders to account and, therefore, drive improvements.
- Governors do not evaluate the effectiveness of the school's use of additional funding. For example, they are unsure of how well leaders use pupil premium funding to remove barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the achievement of targeted pupils is variable.
- Governors are passionate about the school and the community it serves. They are clear in their vision that the school must be the vehicle to improve the life prospects of its pupils. To this end, they support investment in learning enhancements such as visits, workshops and events. However, they do not check that these experiences are having the impact they desire.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders, including governors, are clear about their responsibilities in relation to keeping pupils safe. They approach this area of their work diligently, ensuring that all staff and volunteers access appropriate training regularly. As a result, staff know what to do to protect pupils from risks.
- Leaders and staff have an in-depth knowledge of their pupils and build secure

relationships with them. Because of this, pupils say that they have a trusted adult who they can speak to regarding any worries they may have. A highly skilled learning mentor is vigilant in recognising and supporting vulnerable pupils at times of difficulty. Consequently, any potential interruptions to pupils' learning are often avoided.

- Leaders carry out the required checks on staff and volunteers to ensure that all adults working with pupils are suitable to do so.
- Leaders have ensured that the potentially difficult entry and exit to the school, caused by the road layout, are managed well by staff. This means that any potential hazard is minimised.
- The vast majority of pupils, parents and staff agree that the school is a safe and cheerful place. Pupils are keen to welcome visitors and new pupils. As one pupil told inspectors 'It's a very happy school.'

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent. This results in variable progress across year groups and within subjects, especially in writing and in the wider curriculum subjects.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. Teachers do not always move pupils of all abilities on to work that challenges them quickly enough. Some pupils become bored and restless and, when this happens, a few pupils can disrupt the learning of others.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. Assessments of pupils' achievement in writing do not always identify pupils' needs accurately. As a result, teaching does not systematically equip pupils with the skills they require to be successful writers. In addition, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise their writing skills, edit their writing or build up their stamina by writing at length. Teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' writing in English and in wider curriculum lessons are sometimes not high enough. Consequently, pupils' progress in writing is not good, particularly for lower-ability pupils.
- The teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling requires improvement. Errors in pupils' work are sometimes not addressed by adults. Teaching does not place enough emphasis on developing these skills to a good standard.
- Teaching across the wider curriculum is not consistently good. In some cases, teaching enables pupils to develop subject-specific skills effectively, such as map work in geography. However, teachers do not place enough emphasis on broadening pupils' vocabulary in relation to the topics studied. Expectations of pupils' performance across the various subjects are not consistently high. Poor-quality work is accepted too readily.
- The quality of support from teaching assistants, while improving, remains variable. In some year groups and subjects, pupils benefit from the skilful intervention of teaching assistants, who are effective in moving their learning on through intensive support. However, some pupils are overly dependent on teaching assistants, which slows their learning.

- Leaders and teachers have made critical improvements to the teaching of reading. Staff and pupils have embraced a 'reciprocal reading' strategy involving peer collaboration. Most pupils acquire secure reading comprehension skills. Pupils benefit from opportunities to 'read aloud, and think aloud' in response to their reading. Such initiatives are strengthening pupils' understanding of the texts they read. However, systems to identify gaps in pupils' reading skills are not robust enough. As a result, lower-ability pupils are not given enough support, including opportunities to read to an adult.
- Teaching in mathematics is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Daily practice in calculating and manipulating numbers develops pupils' mathematical fluency. This is balanced well alongside regular opportunities for pupils to reason and solve problems. Pupils employ the 'read aloud, think aloud' strategy to explain their mathematical thinking clearly. As a result, pupils are confident in their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding and use this to make strong progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, along with participation in enhancements, such as the 'healthy minds' project, ensures that pupils develop a solid understanding of mental health. As a result of well-designed learning opportunities, pupils know how to promote their own emotional resilience.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are especially proud to take on the role of e-safety officers, who are fully involved in planning learning activities for pupils on 'Safer Internet Day'. As a result of the high profile given to online safety, pupils are knowledgeable about how to avoid any potential risks.
- Leaders and staff place high importance on pupils respecting others. Assemblies and PSHE lessons focus on challenging stereotypes and understanding the range of faiths and cultural backgrounds which exist within the pupils' own community. Pupils, staff and the majority of parents say that instances of bullying are rare and are dealt with appropriately by staff when they do occur.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have been successful in significantly reducing absences so that pupils' attendance is now in line with the national average. A substantial group of pupils especially enjoy starting their day at the school's breakfast club. In the past, the proportion of pupils who were regularly absent from the school was exceptionally high. Intensive work by the school's attendance team has reduced this rate significantly, such that it is now below the national average.
- The recent appointment of a learning mentor has been instrumental in significantly reducing occurrences of exclusions from the school. The trusting relationships she has

built with pupils mean that pupils are well supported and potential incidents of challenging behaviour are often avoided.

- Many pupils consistently display positive attitudes in lessons, take pride in their work and are articulate in discussing their learning. However, when activities do not match pupils' needs, a small minority of pupils become distracted and sometimes disrupt the learning of others.
- Throughout the inspection, pupils' behaviour as they moved around school and at playtimes was, on the whole, calm and orderly. The school's behaviour records reflect rare instances of pupils using derogatory language. However, evidence gathered from pupils and staff suggests that these incidents are taken very seriously.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching result in variations in pupils' progress across the year groups and between subjects especially in writing, English grammar, punctuation and spelling and in the wider curriculum. Lower-ability pupils and disadvantaged pupils in particular do not achieve well.
- Although outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2 improved in 2017 compared to those in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics remained below average. Despite the higher standards reached, too many pupils have left the school without reaching the levels of attainment needed to be successful at secondary school.
- Disadvantaged pupils, who make up over 40% of the school's population, make variable progress across year groups and subjects. By the end of key stage 2, their achievement lags considerably behind others in the school and others nationally. These differences are not reducing quickly enough. The pupil premium funding is not used to good effect.
- Lower-ability pupils do not achieve well in reading and writing. Their achievement in reading is hampered because the quality of support and phonics teaching they receive requires improvement. They do not have enough opportunities to read to an adult to help them catch up with others. In writing, expectations of their achievement in English and in other curriculum subjects are sometimes too low.
- The achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is also variable and reflects the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school. While some make strong progress, others do not, particularly in writing. Provision for this group of pupils requires improvement.
- In Year 6 in 2017, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standards increased considerably in reading, writing and mathematics and was above average in writing and mathematics. Although the achievement of the most-able pupils has improved, it is still not consistently good. Expectations of pupils are sometimes too low to enable the pupils to reach their full potential.
- The progress of the few pupils who join the school who speak little or no English is carefully tracked. This, along with tailored provision and support, results in their English language and communication skills developing quickly. Due to the variability in the quality of teaching in the school, however, pupils who speak English as an

additional language do not make consistently good progress across the various subjects.

- Pupils' achievement in writing requires improvement. Pupils are not equipped with the skills they require to be successful writers. They do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills both in English and in the wider curriculum subjects. Similarly, progress in English grammar, punctuation and spelling is not consistently good. Pupils of all abilities make careless errors in their written work. Pupils' spelling of basic words, and more technical vocabulary, is weaker than it should be. Too many pupils are working below the age-expected standard as a result.
- In 2016, Year 6 pupils' achievement in reading was weak. Pupils did not make adequate progress from their starting points and standards were low. However, since this time, improvements to the teaching of reading have helped to improve pupils' achievement in reading considerably across the school. The proportions of pupils reaching both the expected standards and the higher levels of attainment in reading were much closer to the national average in 2017. Leaders' focus on reading and raising its profile even further continues. Many pupils are now making good progress. However, the achievement of lower-ability pupils in reading still requires further improvement.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics has improved and is now good. Teachers' good subject knowledge, along with regular opportunities for pupils to put their calculation and problem-solving skills into practice in a range of subjects, enables pupils to become confident young mathematicians.
- Achievement in the wider curriculum is variable. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low and poor-quality work is accepted too readily. Pupils' vocabulary in relation to the various topics studied is underdeveloped.



## School details

Unique reference number	107040
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10042191

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lisa Swann-Ferris
Headteacher	Martin Moss
Telephone number	0114 2430925
Website	<a href="http://www.limpsfield.ik.org">www.limpsfield.ik.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@limpsfield.sheffield.sch.uk">enquiries@limpsfield.sheffield.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	19–20 February 2014

## Information about this school

- There have been significant changes to the school's staffing since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher in September 2014.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is almost double the national average.
- Pupils come from 13 different ethnic backgrounds. White British pupils and Asian or Asian British Pakistani pupils make up the two largest ethnic groups in the school. Additionally, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is just above the national average. A small number of pupils join the school with limited or no English language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club for its pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across the school in a range of subjects. Many of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, talked to them about their learning and listened to them read. Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons, around school and at playtimes and lunchtimes. The four responses to Ofsted's pupil survey were considered, along with the school's own survey of pupils' views.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, governors, a school improvement partner and a group of staff.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plans, minutes from governing body meetings and monitoring records of the quality of teaching and learning. Information relating to safeguarding and information about pupils' progress, attainment, behaviour and attendance were also viewed.
- Inspectors talked to a number of parents at the start of the school day and viewed the results of the school's own survey of parents' views. They also took account of the 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 21 free-text responses.
- The 14 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Mary Lanovy-Taylor

Ofsted Inspector

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