

# Leys Junior School

Flowery Leys Lane, Alfreton, DE55 7HA

**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Standards in English and mathematics are average rather than above average.
- Too few pupils exceed the expected rate of progress, especially in mathematics, because expectations are not high enough and they are insufficiently challenged in lessons.
- Too much of the teaching in the school requires improvement.
- Information about pupils is not used well enough to pitch work at the correct level for all of them.
- Marking does not give pupils good enough advice on how they can improve their work.
- Leadership requires improvement because the skills of some leaders are underdeveloped.
- Procedures for managing the performance of teachers have not been rigorous enough to ensure that teaching is good.
- The governing body has not held school leaders to account with sufficient rigour to ensure that teaching is good.

### The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school.
- Leadership has been effective in improving teaching and achievement since the last inspection, and in raising standards in writing.
- Safety and pastoral procedures are very effective.
- Productive relationships have been established with parents and have helped to raise attendance rates to just above average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed eight teachers.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, met with them to discuss their lessons, and scrutinised their work.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, local authority representatives, staff, and pupils.
- Informal discussions were held with some parents.
- Inspectors took account of the questionnaire responses from 14 staff, responses from the recent parent questionnaire issued by the school and the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- School assessment data, self-evaluation information, procedures for the performance management of teachers and the school's development plan were scrutinised.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined by inspectors.

## Inspection team

Tim Bristow, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Derek Barnes

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is smaller than the average-sized junior school.
- The very large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average (those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs). The proportion supported by school action is average.
- An above average proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher joined the school at the beginning of September 2012.

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

- Improve teaching in English and mathematics across the school so that the quality of learning and achievement are good by:
  - planning work that is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, but particularly the more able
  - paying closer attention to the learning of pupils in lessons so that work and activities can be better tailored and adapted to meet their needs
  - ensuring that teachers' expectations of achievement are as high as their expectations of behaviour
  - improving marking so that pupils receive systematic, explicit advice on the steps they must take to reach their targets.
- Ensure that school leaders and the governing body improve the pupils' achievement to good by:
  - refining performance management procedures so that they are effective in sustaining improvements to teaching and leadership
  - equipping all school leaders with the skills to accurately check, give advice on and lead improvement to the quality of teaching and learning
  - making sure that the governing body rigorously holds all school leaders to account for the impact of its work on reaching the school's strategic goals for teaching and learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils join Year 3 with attainment in English and mathematics that is broadly average. Most then make the expected progress and leave school in Year 6 with attainment that is average. Occasionally, such as in 2010, attainment overall is above average.
- In 2011, attainment dropped to below average because a group of boys did not make the expected progress. A scrutiny of assessment information for the last three years shows that this was unusual. In 2012, local authority and school assessment information shows that attainment in English and mathematics of boys is above average when compared to boys nationally.
- Progress varies from class to class as a result of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Too few pupils exceed the expected rate of progress because, in some lessons, their work does not provide them with sufficient challenge and they report that they find it easy.
- The majority of pupils known to benefit from pupil premium funding made better than expected progress in 2012 because of the effective use made of the money to increase the level of staffing in lessons. By the time they leave Year 6, assessment information shows that the school has successfully narrowed the gap between these pupils' attainment and the overall national average.
- Nearly all disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. Some groups, particularly those who receive additional help for reading and writing in Year 6, make better than expected progress.
- Overall, the majority of pupils now make progress in writing that exceeds expectations. By Year 6, they write competently and confidently in a range of styles. However, the quality of handwriting does not match the much better quality of the content of writing. This is because teachers place insufficient emphasis on this important aspect of presentation.
- The progress pupils make in mathematics does not match that in writing and requires improvement. In lessons, pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to apply and practise their skills by carrying out problem-solving and investigation activities.
- Progress in reading is improving. Recent changes to lessons where pupils practise their reading have improved the quality of learning to good. Less-able readers report that they enjoy the regular opportunities that they have to read with an adult in school, which is helping them to make the expected progress.
- Pupils have a very good attitude. They arrive in lessons eager to learn. However, teachers sometimes miss the opportunity to capitalise on this by limiting the time for pupils to use their own ideas or to demonstrate their independence and creativity.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teachers have been conscientious in implementing the requirements for teaching set out by school leaders. There is a consistency to the structure of lessons. Learning objectives are displayed so that pupils understand the work to be completed and how they will know that they have achieved success. The arrangements of pupils into ability-based classes for English and mathematics lessons, and work that is planned to meet the needs of different abilities, results in most pupils making the expected progress.

- Teaching is not yet good. This is because school leaders have concentrated on making sure teachers include all these elements in a lesson but have paid insufficient attention to the quality of implementation and their impact on learning.
- In lessons where teaching requires improvement, teachers miss the opportunity to adapt or change the activities for different groups of pupils because they do not pay sufficient attention to how well pupils are learning. Some pupils then make less progress than they could.
- Where teaching requires improvement, teachers demonstrate that they do not have high enough expectations of what the most-able pupils could achieve. These pupils receive work that they find easy to complete.
- Occasionally, different groups of pupils have to listen to introductions to lessons that are not sharply focused on the information or guidance they need to complete their work.
- In a minority of lessons, the teaching is good. For example, in an English lesson in Year 6, nearly all the pupils made good progress. Objectives for learning for each group were sharply focused on what they had to achieve. Pupils worked extremely cooperatively together, demonstrating a good level of independence. The few less-able pupils were very well supported to match the progress of their friends because of the additional help that they received from teaching assistants. The teacher paid close attention to pupils, testing their understanding through effective questioning. She then changed and amended activities where necessary to maintain the quality of learning.
- Marking requires improvement because it is not sufficiently well linked to the steps that pupils need to take to improve their work. Teachers mark work conscientiously but do not refer to pupils' individual targets for learning, nor do they give pupils sufficient opportunity to read the advice given or to respond to it.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are targeted for extra help, usually from teaching assistants. The school knows that this is ensuring that these pupils make the expected progress. However, school leaders and teachers have not checked carefully enough to see whether this extra help is as effective as it could be in accelerating progress still further.

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

- All pupils and their parents report that they feel safe and secure in the good, caring environment provided in the school. Arrangements and partnerships to care for the small minority of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are very effective.
- An excellent feature of behaviour and safety is the anti-bullying strategy within the curriculum. Pupils demonstrate that they are extremely knowledgeable about the different types of bullying. There is very little bullying in the school, but teachers are not complacent. They have correctly prioritised the importance of ensuring that pupils are equipped to know how to deal with bullying when they are outside of school and in preparation for the next stage in their education.
- An impressive aspect is the anti-bullying policy that has been produced by the pupils and promoted in the school. Pupils also take responsibility for checking that their friends stick to the requirements of the policy.
- Effective procedures to promote good attendance have led to a steady rise. Attendance is now just above average, with very little persistent absence. Nearly all pupils arrive at school

on time. School records show that the rate of punctuality is very close to 100%.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is promoted very well. For example, in a very good assembly, a strong sense of family and belonging was fostered. The theme of the assembly was to keep on trying. The content was inspirational and completely engrossed all pupils, who demonstrated great empathy with the message being promoted.
- One common feature shared by many pupils is their love of sport. The school provides them with an excellent range of clubs during and after school. This has fostered a sense of pride held by pupils in the achievement of the school teams.
- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding. Pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning because the marking and guidance they receive does not make it clear enough how they can improve their work. Where teaching requires improvement, pupils are limited in their opportunities to demonstrate their independence.

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

- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had only been in post a few weeks. She has made an accurate and astute evaluation of the priorities for improvement and begun to make changes. Understandably, this work has had little impact on the school because it is too recent.
- There is some effective leadership of safeguarding, teaching and learning that demonstrates that the school has the necessary capacity for improvement. For example, the steps taken to raise standards in reading and writing have been effective. The leaders responsible demonstrate that they are able to identify where changes need to be made and can then lead the required improvements effectively.
- Leadership requires improvement because other staff have less-well-developed leadership skills and are, consequently, not taking the responsibility that they should for the leadership of teaching and learning.
- The school has procedures for performance management, tracking and measuring pupils' progress, and for checking the quality of teaching and learning. While these procedures are adequate, they are not sophisticated enough to aid school leaders in sustaining good teaching. For example, performance management targets for teachers are generally focused on training opportunities or changes in provision. These are not sufficiently linked to the impact they have on pupils' progress. Therefore, it is difficult to evaluate their effectiveness in improving teaching and learning.
- The curriculum offers pupils a broad range of enrichment activities that bring excitement and interest to their lessons. The recent improvements to the curriculum for English and the adequate range of opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in other subjects have yet to be matched by improvements in mathematics. For example, there are too few practical opportunities for pupils to apply their measuring skills in other subjects.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a reasonable range of opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and cultures. It does not, however, give pupils sufficient first-hand experience of people from different backgrounds within British society which would aid them in their development as citizens of the United Kingdom.
- The school has recently benefited from local authority expertise to assist it to improve the provision for writing. However, it has not done enough to challenge school leaders and the governing body to improve teaching and achievement to good.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- fulfils its statutory responsibilities and manages the school's finances well
- is highly supportive of the school and has been instrumental in prioritising the importance of providing a safe, caring environment for learning
- does not hold school leaders to account as rigorously as it should for the performance management of teachers or the achievement of pupils.

## 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>	112492
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401272

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>	153
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Coleman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nichola Way
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2010
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