

Heatherbrook Primary School

Astill Lodge Road, Beaumont Leys, Leicester, LE4 1BE

Inspection dates 13–14 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been falling in recent years and are low by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement is inadequate because too much teaching is not good enough and has failed to enable pupils to achieve as well as they should.
- Not enough pupils made the nationally expected progress in English and mathematics across Key Stage 2 in 2010 and 2011 and very few made progress that was better.
- Teaching is inadequate. There is too much variation in teaching quality as pupils move through the school.
- Teachers do not always manage pupils' behaviour well enough, so unsettled behaviour sometimes interrupts learning. Although improving, attendance is still below the national average.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher retain too much responsibility and this has limited the contribution made by other staff in tackling the school's weaknesses.

The school has the following strengths

- Improvements are beginning to show in key areas of the school's work; for example in the better progress being made by pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Leaders and managers of the school, including the governing body, are demonstrating the capacity to tackle the school's weaknesses and raise standards.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress due to good teaching and the provision of a well-structured learning environment in which children are safe and well cared for.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed eight lessons taught by eight teachers and observed six groups where letters and sounds were taught across Key Stage 1. They spent eight hours directly observing pupils’ learning in class.
- Four joint observations were carried out with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and scrutinised pupils’ work in books and on display.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior leaders, staff and pupils. Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and a consultant working with the school.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including improvement plans, the leaders’ evaluation of the school’s performance, as well as assessment data from the monitoring of pupils’ progress. Documents detailing the school’s arrangements for safeguarding pupils were scrutinised.
- There was insufficient response to Parent View. Results of the school’s parents’ questionnaires were used as part of inspection evidence.
- Questionnaire responses from 19 staff were considered.

Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Sharona Semlali

Additional inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to other primary schools.
- The majority of pupils are White British, but a greater-than-average percentage comes from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average. Very few are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, and those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is similar to other schools.
- The deputy headteacher and the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage are new to their roles and another teacher has joined the school recently.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning before school.
- A local authority run pre-school for nursery children is located next to the school. This is not the responsibility of the governing body and is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is at least good by:
 - making sure that teachers and other adults consistently apply agreed behaviour management procedures in lessons and by making their expectations for behaviour clear to pupils
 - extending the good-quality marking seen in literacy and numeracy to other subjects
 - making sure that the tasks set in lessons match the needs of individuals and groups in order to accelerate learning for all pupils
 - providing teachers with opportunities to observe good and outstanding practice, including that already present in the school.
- Improve pupils' progress across the school to at least the nationally expected rate so that standards at the end of Year 6 improve by:
 - extending opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum
 - involving pupils routinely in the assessment of their own and others' work
 - making sure that teachers' marking is clear about the next steps pupils need to take to improve their work
 - ensuring that pupils improve the presentation of their work.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - using appropriate and rigorous criteria to judge the quality of teaching and learning and by providing clear feedback to teachers about how they can improve
 - involving new subject leaders in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance and in the strategic planning for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Children start the Reception Year with skills, knowledge and understanding that are typically lower than expected for their age. By the time they transfer into Year 1, attainment is average in all areas of learning. Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Progress slows in Key Stage 1. Standards in reading, writing and in mathematics fell steadily between 2009 and 2011, when they were below the national average. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and progress through the key stage presents a similar picture. Standards at the end of Year 6 fell over time, but were broadly average. In 2012, provisional results from national tests show that they declined further.
- Achievement at Key Stage 2 has been inadequate over the last two years. Too few pupils made the nationally expected progress in both English and mathematics. Based on the 2012 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, it is likely that the school will not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- While most groups of pupils, including those pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, are making inadequate progress, those for whom the school receives the pupil premium are demonstrating better progress in relation to their starting points due to a good range of effective support strategies. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make inadequate progress.
- A range of initiatives to raise standards and improve progress has started to show impact. As a result of closer monitoring and focused teaching about letters and the sounds they make, attainment at the end of Year 2 improved in 2012. Results of statutory assessments were much closer to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Previous inadequate progress has been reversed, but still requires further improvement.
- Pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are showing significant improvement in their work. The school's predictions for attainment at the end of Year 6 show these pupils are on track to achieve standards above the national average in English and mathematics. This is supported by inspection lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work. Workbooks show good levels of productivity and progress, but the way pupils present their work requires improvement.
- In lessons, older pupils show good learning skills. Year 6 pupils, for example, compiled a prosecution case against the three little pigs for murdering the big bad wolf, who they decided was not the real villain. Using the teacher's well-constructed guidance, Year 5 pupils learned how to write interesting and imaginative sentences such as, 'Like a tiger, the enormous crocodile showed his teeth, brighter than the golden sun' and 'Behind the enormous crocodile, the monkey tried to save the children from being eaten while the sun set behind the mountains.' These examples are typical of the improvements currently taking place.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- Ineffective teaching fails to stimulate and engage pupils fully in their learning so they often lose concentration. This is because work is not always matched well enough to individual learning needs and means that pupils who need extra support find the work hard, and those capable of completing more difficult tasks find the work too easy and lose concentration. Additionally, the planning of tasks for different groups fails to help pupils to develop their literacy skills to an

appropriate level.

- Inspection evidence confirms that there is still too much variation in the quality of teaching and learning, although the school's monitoring records show the quality of teaching is improving over time. Teaching observed during the inspection varied from good to inadequate, and was best in Reception and in Years 5 and 6.
- In lessons where teaching is good, pupils are challenged at levels appropriate to their own capabilities and are continuously involved so they do not become bored or lose concentration. Lessons have a brisk pace with tasks moving onto the next level immediately pupils are ready. Pupils are active participants and well-directed questioning helps them to sustain interest.
- Lesson observations during the inspection, and responses to the staff questionnaire, show that teachers and teaching assistants do not consistently apply the school's agreed behaviour management procedures. Neither do they show similar expectations in relation to the standards of behaviour they accept from pupils. For example, some adults try to address the class while pupils are carrying on their own conversations. Other teachers insist that pupils listen to them and pay full attention. This gives inconsistent messages to pupils about the school's expectations of their behaviour.
- The marking of pupils' work is good in English and mathematics, although scrutiny of pupils' books highlighted that a few pieces remain unmarked in these subjects and in their topic folders. Good marking is enhancing pupils' self-esteem, indicating what is done well and where work can be improved. Marking has not been effective in encouraging pupils to improve the presentation of their work, however. Marking in subjects other than English and mathematics requires improvement. Pupils do not play a sufficient part in the assessment of their own or others' work. They are not clear about their targets or the next learning steps needed to make progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- In lessons where teaching was inadequate or required improvement, pupils' unacceptable behaviour had a negative impact on the progress made. During observations, good teaching promoted good behaviour and resulted in good progress.
- Most pupils do not manage their own behaviour, even though the school's behaviour records show there has been significant improvement recently. Older pupils, particularly in Year 6, are settled at all times in class, during school assemblies and at break times. They set a good example for younger pupils. The behaviour of younger pupils, including those in Years 3 and 4, requires improvement. In lessons, they do not sustain concentration unless directly supervised and guided by an adult. In assemblies they do not settle quickly enough.
- A small minority of pupils in the school struggle to behave well. Some of these pupils joined the school relatively recently. Strategies adopted by the staff are having a positive impact on the behaviour of many of these pupils and their behaviour has improved significantly. Others, however, provide a challenge for staff, particularly in lessons. The high proportion of exclusions is confined to very few pupils and this number is declining.
- Inspection evidence confirms there are very few recorded incidents of bullying or racism. If pupils are concerned, they know where to go if they need help and they are confident of their safety in school.
- Pupils say they are happy in school. Those spoken to are satisfied with the overall behaviour, although they can say where it is poor, such as for some younger pupils at break times. Older

pupils help out the younger ones when they are experiencing difficulty. As one pupil explained, 'Year 6 or teachers step in. We have friendly faces.'

- Strategies adopted by the school to raise attendance are proving to be effective. Attendance has improved in recent years but still remains below the national average.
- Most pupils are keen to do well when motivated and are proud of their achievements. However, behaviour in and around school, due to inconsistent application of the behaviour code and adults' unclear expectations, means that the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Through self-evaluation, school leaders, in partnership with the governing body, have accurately identified key areas of weakness. The development plan has relevant targets, appropriate challenge and is regularly reviewed. This work is resulting in higher attainment in the current Year 5 and 6 classes and better outcomes at the end of Year 2. Actions to improve teaching are evident, although too much remains inadequate or requiring improvement. There is general improvement in the behaviour of pupils, although inadequacies remain and the rate of exclusions is too high. However, identified improvements confirm that the school's leaders have the capacity to improve the school further.
- The local authority has identified the school as requiring support and therefore has a relatively high level of intervention. It has supported in a number of key areas and its impact has been effective in maintaining good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, during staffing changes, and in supporting the leaders to make improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Previously, the headteacher and deputy headteacher retained too much responsibility for making improvements and the roles of other leaders were not developed sufficiently; this created a barrier to the school moving forward. Changes in staffing have opened up opportunities and these have quickly been seized upon by school governors. Potential middle leaders have been identified and appropriate training is in place to develop their leadership skills so that they have the competencies to support school improvement.
- The curriculum has been redesigned into a themed approach to learning and is successfully encouraging greater levels of interest and engagement. A range of initiatives has been introduced to raise standards in literacy and numeracy and these are proving to be successful, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Years 5 and 6, although there are not enough opportunities to promote better writing in subjects other than English.
- Statutory duties are met. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding of pupils met current government requirements fully. The school attracted an excellent grading in the recent health and safety audit carried out by the local authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is increasingly effective because governors have become much more involved in the school since the previous inspection and robust systems have been implemented to provide them with first-hand and detailed knowledge of the school's performance
 - now ensures that targets are sufficiently challenging
 - has a focus on engaging with the community and is working hard to overcome any barriers to preventing parents and carers from supporting pupils' learning and in the life of the school
 - challenges and supports the school increasingly well, with governors fully involved in the

performance management of the headteacher and the staff and so helping to improve teaching and raise standards

- ensures that finances are managed carefully so that available funds are used appropriately; this includes the pupil premium, which is proving beneficial in meeting the needs of eligible 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

Unique reference number	120067
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	401903

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Osborn
Headteacher	Lee Venning
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2009
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