

Leas Park Junior School

Ley Lane, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, NG19 8LD

Inspection dates 8–9 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils enjoy school, always try to do their best work and leave as mature, well-rounded citizens.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment is improving year by year, and is very high in English and above average in mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well because the teaching is consistently good. Teachers motivate pupils by their imaginative use of technology and fast pace to lessons.
- The teaching of reading and writing is particularly good, which is why pupils make such rapid progress.
- Behaviour is good because that is what is expected. The rules are clear and pupils respond well to the way teachers apply them consistently.
- Pupils say how safe they feel at school and how adults care for them so well.
- The headteacher and senior leaders evaluate the school's performance well and are good at rectifying weaknesses. They track pupils' progress accurately and are quick to support any who are falling behind.
- The leaders support teachers well in their professional development through good training based on rigorous evaluation of their performance in the classroom.
- Pupils find the activities provided interesting and enjoy the topics that embrace all subjects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2 is not as fast as in English. Pupils, particularly lower-attaining ones, sometimes find it hard to calculate quickly in their heads and this affects their learning in problem-solving tasks.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 26 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors also made a number of brief visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring files, behaviour records, and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Terry Elston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

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Additional Inspector

Fiona Robinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The proportion of pupils 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, is below average.
- There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those supported at school action and school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has recently achieved The Eco Schools and Healthy Schools awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make the same rapid progress in mathematics as they do in English by:
 - ensuring that class teachers taking greater responsibility for the teaching of lower-attaining pupils
 - giving pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work and attain the next steps in their learning
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise quick calculations
 - leaders supporting teachers through rigorous evaluation of their support of lower-attaining pupils
 - providing teachers with more opportunities to learn from the best practice in this school and further afield.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress from starting points that are generally above average.
- Their attainment by the end of Year 6 is high in English because of the good teaching of reading and writing skills and many good opportunities to hone their skills in all subjects.
- They read widely and with good expression. Many more-able pupils skim and scan texts in books and on computers to gain information quickly.
- Pupils make their writing interesting for the reader by using exciting words and thinking of imaginative ways to link sentences together. Some pupils' writing is at the level of those in their second year in secondary schools.
- Teachers have improved the quality of boys' writing in particular by giving them exciting tasks such as describing a robbery and telling the story of Macbeth in modern language. Some of this work is outstanding.
- In mathematics, while some pupils attain very high standards, the lower-attaining ones do not always make the best possible progress because they lack the skills to calculate quickly in their heads.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress overall. They do particularly well in reading because of the good teaching on how to tackle unfamiliar words. This raises their confidence; one pupil commented, 'I used to hate reading but now I will just pick up a book for fun.'
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium make good progress. The school uses the funds well to support these pupils, including providing individual teaching, extra support from teaching assistants and time to enable leaders to check on their progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- In typical lessons, teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn and make a point of revisiting these goals throughout the lesson. This helps teachers make accurate checks on pupils' learning and see what they need to do next.
- The skilled teaching of reading and how to build sounds into words helps pupils read with confidence. Teachers build well on this learning by providing many opportunities to read in all subjects and this helps to explain why pupils make such rapid progress.
- Teachers are very good at teaching writing skills, so pupils learn how to capture the reader's interest and provide important information. For example, their work on volcanoes was full of exciting description that made it clear how it must feel to be close to a massive eruption.
- In mathematics, teachers make lessons interesting by providing many practical opportunities to, for example, solve problems and calculate the area of different shapes. More-able pupils have

good opportunities to extend their learning by working independently at challenging investigations involving patterns of numbers and fractions, and this makes the best of their skills and enthusiasm. Where teaching is less effective, too little attention is paid to the development of calculation skills, and this particularly affects the achievements of lower-attaining pupils.

- Pupils say how teachers make lessons fun, and this helps their learning. For example, in one lesson the teacher built the lesson around the story of the Three Little Pigs. Having discussed the plight of the pigs the pupils were thrilled to be able to interrogate the member of staff dressed as the wolf to determine its motives when blowing at the houses. They made rapid progress and could hardly wait to write their own accounts of the story.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high, and pupils soon follow the rules about listening carefully and putting their hands up to answer a question.
- Teachers mark pupils' work promptly and, certainly in English, provide helpful comments to help them do better next time. In mathematics, this is not always the case so pupils have less information about how to move on to their next steps.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make very good progress when taught in lessons by the teachers. In mathematics, they are often withdrawn from the class and the work provided by the teaching assistants is not always of the same quality as that enjoyed by more-able pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in class, when moving around the school and in the playground. They listen carefully to the teacher and are quick to move into groups and prepare themselves for learning. This is because teachers are consistent in their high expectations and the application of the policy for rewards and sanctions.
- Pupils say how much they enjoy school because, as one said, 'It's a really nice place to be.' Attendance is above average and improving with rigorous systems to discourage unnecessary absences.
- Pupils feel very safe and free from bullying or racist behaviour of any kind. They say how well the adults manage aggressive behaviour, and records show a marked decrease in incidents over the last two years.
- Pupils show great care for the environment and a very good awareness of their impact on it. The weekly eco-award is taken seriously and the winning class shows delight when awarded the trophy.
- They develop a good awareness of health and safety and speak knowledgeably about the potential dangers of the internet.
- Pupils have a well deserved reputation in the local area for their courtesy. They treat adults and one another with respect and listen carefully to different views in activities such as 'talking partners' when they share knowledge with one another.
- They have a good knowledge of their targets for improvement, although this is stronger in English than in mathematics.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads well with high expectations of adults, pupils and of herself. These expectations are made clear and help to create a team where all are working towards common ambitious goals.
- The rigorous and accurate evaluation of the school's performance by the headteacher and senior leaders provides a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has led to the marked improvement in attainment over recent years, particularly in mathematics.
- This, together with good improvements in the teaching, explains why the school has made such valuable changes since the last inspection and shows that it is well set to do even better.
- Leaders show strong commitment to providing equal opportunities for all pupils. Their careful analysis of the achievements of different groups, such as boys and girls and those known to be eligible for free school meals, enables them to provide support to any pupils who are underachieving.
- Shortcomings in the achievement of less-able pupils in mathematics have been identified but the quality of support they have is not evaluated well enough to ensure they make the best possible progress. Teachers have some opportunities to learn from some of the best practice in school but not enough to ensure consistency between classes.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and learning rigorously and give teachers clear guidance on how to improve. These targets form an important part of the annual meetings on teachers' performance and decisions about their pay.
- Leaders make good use of local schools and a 'partner school' to provide joint, cost-effective training. This has been particularly helpful in raising attainment in writing and mathematics.
- Safeguarding systems are robust and meet all requirements. These are reviewed regularly by school leaders and the governing body.
- The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. Their comments to inspectors and responses to the on-line questionnaires were very positive, particularly in terms of behaviour, their children's progress, the quality of teaching and the way the school is led.
- Activities provided for pupils are interesting, and the school has done much to raise attainment by boys by giving them opportunities to explore topics such as the solar system and space travel. Pupils have many good opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills in all subjects, but this is less evident in mathematics.
- The school gives pupils many opportunities to reflect on issues such as the wonders of nature and the plight of evacuees during the last world war. They learn much about different ways of life around the world although there are few first-hand opportunities to learn about different cultures.
- The school has made good use of the expertise from the local authority in the past to raise the quality of teaching and learning. This support is less evident now that the school has made such marked improvements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a good awareness of the school’s effectiveness, including its performance compared with other schools; this is gained through regular visits, meetings with senior leaders and observations of lessons. The governing body challenges leaders vigorously. It takes a full part in school improvement and is closely involved in the evaluation of teachers’ performance, its impact on their pay and support of those not performing well enough. Training for the governing body is comprehensive and matched well to the school’s needs. Governors have a good awareness of the school’s budget. For example, they know how the funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent, why it is allocated in this way and the impact it has on pupils’ academic and personal development.

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	122441
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	402097

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	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Briggs
Headteacher	Helen Atkins
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2009
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