

Sundon Park Junior School

Kinross Crescent, , Luton, LU3 3JU

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- There are occasions when pupils do not learn quickly enough. This is because teachers do not routinely make use of information about what pupils already know to plan work pitched at the correct level.
- Teachers do not always promote writing in a range of styles across all areas of the curriculum. Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to develop their writing skills in different subjects.
- In mathematics, pupils lack skills in practical problem solving and this slows their progress.
- Some lessons move at a slow pace, with little rigour or challenge offered to all pupils to do their best. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work on their own to find things out.
- Teachers do not consistently insist on the highest standards of presentation and handwriting. They do not give pupils clear enough guidance on how to improve their work or the time needed to for pupils to respond.
- While governors are becoming skilled in analysing data on pupils' progress, they do not yet use this well enough for strengthening teaching and ensuring all pupils achieve well.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching and the wide range of outdoor activities including after school clubs offered by the school have a positive impact on pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- There are secure arrangements to ensure pupils' safety. Pupils are happy and enjoy school and their attendance is above average.
- The headteacher's vision for the school is clear, well considered and shared by all staff who are committed to raising achievement. Teachers' performance is managed effectively and this is increasingly leading to improvements.
- Pupils behave well, show respect, courtesy and consideration for others.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 teachers and visited 16 lessons, of which three were observed jointly with members of the senior management team.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body, the local authority representative and school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school’s progress tracking data, planning and monitoring documentation, self-evaluation summary, the school development plan, the safeguarding and equalities policies and minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and others completed by staff. They also talked with parents and pupils about the school’s work and looked at school’s recently completed surveys of parents’ views.

Inspection team

Raminder Arora, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fiona Robinson

Additional Inspector

David Belsey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average school of its type. The number of pupils on roll has risen in the last two years.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic or mixed heritage backgrounds is much higher than that found in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for groups of pupils, including those eligible for free school meals) is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is average, and those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There is no alternative provision made for pupils to learn at places away from the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets.
- There have been significant changes in staff since the last inspection, both in teaching and key leadership posts, with the recent appointment of a new headteacher and a deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be consistently good or better in order to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - having high expectations of all and routinely making use of information on pupils' achievements to plan for their differing needs
 - improving the consistency in marking, the use of targets and pupils' involvement in their learning
 - ensuring that all marking shows pupils how to improve, and that pupils are given the chance to respond and improve their work
 - creating more opportunities to promote pupils' thinking and independent enquiry skills.
- Improve attainment and achievement in writing and mathematics by:
 - providing further and more frequent opportunities for extended writing across different subjects
 - writing for a variety of purposes and extending skills in sentence structure and the use of interesting vocabulary
 - ensuring pupils are given clear advice on how to improve their handwriting and the presentation of their work
 - providing well-planned opportunities to extend pupils' practical and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Sharpen the focus of the governing body, on improving the pupils' progress and quality of teaching, by:
 - applying the skills in analysing data on individual pupils' achievement
 - working more closely with all staff to work on those factors that will improve their teaching the most.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **requires improvement**

- Pupils' progress across the school is inconsistent. Consequently, they are not building as quickly as they could on their broadly average attainment when they join the school. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been broadly average until last year when they dipped in mathematics and writing. Results in reading remained broadly average. Standards in reading are improving due to the better organised guided reading sessions.
- In some classes pupils' progress is accelerating because the governors have made some strong appointments. This is making a difference in the quality of teaching which has shown improvements in the last two terms. Improvements are most marked in Year 6 where tasks are well planned and interesting and, as a result, pupils are making faster progress. Inspectors' observations of pupils' work in class and in their books confirm that, across the school, many pupils are making better progress, this year, in writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and gaps in their learning are closing. The progress of pupils at school action plus is closing the gap with that for similar groups nationally. This is because pupils' needs are identified quickly and they are given extra support from skilled teaching assistants.
- Pupils who speak a first language other than English make progress in line with their peers. This is due to the clear explanations and additional activities used by teachers and teaching assistants to develop these pupils' spoken and written English.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium support make the progress expected of them because they receive effective help from teaching assistants in reading, writing and mathematics. Their progress is accelerating this year but their attainment remains lower than that of their classmates. This group of pupils benefit from support which gives them access to trips, sport and music as part of the school's policy for inclusion, promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination.

The quality of teaching **requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvements because it is not enabling the majority of pupils to make good progress in their learning. Some lessons move at a slow pace, especially where the teacher talks for too long. In these lessons, opportunities for pupils to engage in and enjoy learning are lost and they do not make fast enough progress.
- More effective lessons generally proceed at a brisk pace and teachers plan their lessons to take account of the different abilities of pupils, but this is not consistent. Not all teachers know how well pupils are doing and the work they give pupils is often too hard or too easy. Pupils are set targets by some teachers, but these are not used effectively in marking to highlight improvement or to identify pupils' next steps in learning.
- Lessons, for example in science, sometimes include practical elements that capture pupils' attention and enthusiasm. However, in one such lesson, although pupils handled different resources well they worked on a task that was same for all and not sufficiently demanding for the more-able pupils.
- Pupils' relationships with adults and with each other are good and they are almost always keen

to learn. Many lessons contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities to work in pairs and in groups, to help each other and to discuss aspects of lessons encourage the skills of co-operation and negotiation.

- In an outstanding and creative lesson with plenty of challenge, dealing with partitioning of numbers, the pupils had great fun. The teacher developed the lesson in well-managed stages and created excitement in pupils' learning, resulting in excellent achievement.
- While teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is improving, opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of others are not encouraged in all lessons. There is some good marking that helps pupils to improve their work and allows them time to respond to teachers' comments but this is not consistent across the school.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to develop their writing skills within different subjects. Teachers do not always give pupils clear advice on how to improve their handwriting and the presentation of their work. In some classes, adults do not provide a good enough model of handwriting to help pupils improve.
- The teachers do not create enough opportunities for the pupils to find things out for themselves when they are working on projects. For example, in a science lesson, all the resources were handled by the teacher while the pupils watched. There are not enough chances for pupils to follow their own challenging lines of enquiry in different subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

good

- Behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils feel very safe in school and say that there is no bullying and that when minor disagreements occur, these are dealt with quickly by adults. Pupils also say that they have been taught how to recognise and deal with bullying, should they experience it or see it happening to others.
 - Pupils agree that behaviour has improved considerably due to the clear rewards and sanctions now in place. Everyone understands the procedures and, as a result, there is little or no disruption in lessons. There is a nurture room where pupils who sometimes have difficulty managing their own behaviour, receive effective support from trained staff.
 - Pupils understand the damage caused by prejudiced behaviour, such as racist name-calling. They are very clear about the school's expectations of their behaviour and say they are happy and enjoy coming to school. Pupils' attendance is above average.
 - Most pupils are enthusiastic learners and have good attitudes to learning. They say that the teachers make lessons interesting and that they love school trips and school clubs. Almost all attend one or more clubs, including such sporting activities as cycling, curling, and cross-country running.
 - The pupils play and work together harmoniously at all times. Older pupils and school council members are available to help any children who want support during break times. Pupils are keen to take and carry out responsibilities. They participate in charity events and take initiatives to raise money.
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The leadership and management requires improvement

- The new headteacher provides strong, thoughtful leadership which promotes effective teamwork. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and governing body. Recent actions to raise pupils' attainment and to close gaps between that of different groups are starting to take effect. Monitoring systems to track the progress of all groups of pupils are in place. These are now being used to highlight any trends in underperformance.
 - The senior leaders and staff are determined to secure improvement for all pupils in their care. Many staff are new to their roles and are receiving appropriate support and training, for example, they are developing skills to analyse data about how well pupils are doing and to use this to improve their planning.
 - The recently extended senior leadership team have worked successfully to bring about improvements in behaviour. They are rightly focused on improving the quality of teaching to ensure that all is consistently good.
 - The school evaluates its effectiveness accurately. The outcomes are used well to set the development priorities for the school. The school improvement plan is well considered and highlights the areas needing development. It clearly details the amount of improvement to be made and the finances involved as well as the timescales allocated for completion.
 - The school's partnership with other local schools has been beneficial in sharing training opportunities. The local authority has provided effective advice and support for improvements in teaching and pupils' behaviour. New policies and procedures to secure good behaviour and the safety of pupils are being effectively implemented.
 - The school teaches a suitably broad and balanced range of subjects and with an emphasis on learning key literacy and numeracy skills, although pupils do not have enough opportunities for writing in other subjects. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is securely promoted through assemblies and community events.
 - The good use made of performance management targets and regular monitoring has been instrumental in bringing about the recent improvements in the quality of teaching. Through this, the new headteacher has strengthened the school's capacity to continue to improve.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors ensure that all statutory duties are met, including those related to safeguarding. They are keen and supportive with a view to improving the quality of teaching. They are involved in tackling any underperformance and are only prepared to reward very effective teaching. However, governors are aware, there is more to be done to improve teaching in order to ensure that pupils make good progress. They use the information on the school's performance available to them to contribute to the school's strategic planning. They know how the school spends funds to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the impact it is having. A rigorous process has been set up for teachers' performance management focused on raising pupils' achievements and provides appropriate staff training linked to school's priorities. Governors have received training in the use of information about pupils' progress and the school's priorities to help them hold senior leaders to account about how well the school is doing. However, this training has not yet impacted fully in bringing improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
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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	109555
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	405243

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matthew Jenkins
Headteacher	Jennifer Wightman
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 October 2010
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