

# Danesholme Junior School

Motala Close, Corby, NN18 9DT

## Inspection dates

31 January–1 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	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

- Some pupils' rates of progress are too slow, because there is not enough consistently good or better teaching.
- Teachers do not always plan work at the right level of difficulty, so the more-able pupils sometimes find the work too easy.
- Teaching does not generally ensure that pupils develop skills in working independently and thinking for themselves.
- Pupils are unclear about the targets that teachers set for them in mathematics.
- Teachers' marking does too little to help pupils improve their work, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders, including governors, are not thorough enough in checking pupils' progress; consequently, rates of improvement are not rapid enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in Year 6 because they are taught well and get a lot of extra help.
- In most classes, pupils make better progress in writing than in mathematics because they have clearer targets to achieve.
- Pupils with more severe learning difficulties are well supported and make good progress.
- Improvement plans are clear and detailed, and provide a secure basis for improvement in achievement, teaching and leadership.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well. They feel safe and are well cared for.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, many of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and assistant headteachers.
- Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 23 members of staff along with 41 responses submitted by parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors scrutinised the school's last survey of parental opinion.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils, senior leaders and members of teaching and support staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, local authority evaluations of the school's effectiveness, minutes of meetings of the governing body, behaviour records, safeguarding records, and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors looked at information about pupils' progress, scrutinised the work in pupils' books and heard a sample of pupils read.

## Inspection team

Mike Thompson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Burridge	Additional Inspector
Amanda Simpson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Danesholme Junior is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are three classes in each of the four year groups.
- Most pupils are White British and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is in line with the national average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils off site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Four of the class teachers, including three newly qualified teachers, have been appointed since September 2012.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by January 2014, so that it is consistently good or better, and raise achievement particularly in mathematics, by making sure that teachers:
  - always set work at the right levels for pupils of different abilities so that all are suitably challenged in lessons
  - routinely encourage pupils to think more for themselves and develop skills in planning how they are to tackle and set out their own work
  - set clear, concise and suitably challenging targets for pupils to achieve in mathematics
  - make their marking of pupils' work more effective by setting out clearly what pupils should do to improve their work and always check that pupils respond to the comments made and complete their corrections.
- By January 2014, improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - broadening the scope and increasing the frequency of routine checks on teachers' work and pupils' progress
  - ensuring that lesson observations and scrutinies of pupils' work are sharply focused on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning
  - linking judgements about the quality of teaching to the impact it has on how well pupils perform over time
  - ensuring that the governing body is fully informed about the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress so that its members can become more effective in holding the school to account for its actions and make clearer links between teachers' pay and performance.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because in previous years not all pupils have made the progress of which they are capable. The school is turning this situation around and most pupils are now making progress at the expected rates. Within this picture, there remain a few pockets of underachievement in the Year 4 and 5 classes, particularly in mathematics. These are preventing the school from raising standards more rapidly.
- Following a sharp drop in 2010, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 rose in 2011 and was broadly in line with the national average. This level has been maintained in the national tests for 2012. Most pupils in the current Year 6 classes are on course to attain nationally expected levels by the end of the school year.
- Most pupils make steady progress in developing skills in writing. In most instances, pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and sentence structure is in line with national expectations for each of the year groups. Their spelling shows that they have a sound knowledge of phonics (the sounds made by letters) and their handwriting is neat and legible.
- Pupils' skills in reading are generally developed well, and pupils use these effectively to help unlock learning in other subjects. However, the weakest readers sampled in Year 3 had fragile knowledge of some of the basic blends of letter sounds, and were unable to read fluently. In all instances, the pupils were interested in reading and practised daily.
- In mathematics, most pupils are competent in calculation, although in some instances their knowledge of basic facts, such as multiplication tables, is insecure. The pace of learning in some lessons is adversely affected because teachers' explanations are not always clear enough or because there is insufficient challenge for the more-able pupils. Nonetheless, in most instances, pupils are able to apply the skills learned in mathematics when working in other subjects.
- In some classes, pupils achieve well. This is because learning is well structured so that the level of challenge is gradually increased during the course of lessons. In these lessons, pupils have good opportunities to practise and develop the skills learned.
- The school provides a wide range of extra help for pupils who are falling behind. The majority of this is targeted at pupils in Year 6. The school's records of the progress made by the pupils receiving this support show that most benefit from this provision, although rates of accelerated progress vary significantly. For example, while all of the Year 3 pupils in the 'catch-up reading' programme made good or better progress, only about half of the Year 4 pupils achieved similar results.
- The progress made by the large majority of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of their classmates. Pupils who receive 'school action plus' levels of support make good progress because their individual targets provide clear focus for the extra help provided.
- The school is making effective use of the pupil premium to boost attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all activities provided. The pupils eligible for this funding develop their skills, knowledge and understanding at similar rates to their classmates and attain at similar levels to their classmates.

**The quality of teaching requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not always enable pupils' to learn well, particularly in mathematics. There is a marked imbalance between the quality of teaching in English and mathematics. Teaching in five of the eight English lessons observed were good, while in seven of the eight mathematics lessons teaching required improvement.
- The large majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire felt that their children are taught well. However, the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school in all but the Year 6 classes.
- The drive to improve teaching has resulted in a number of plans and policies, but these are not yet fully put into practice by teachers on a daily basis.
- The school has a clear approach to varying the level of challenge within lessons through identifying what pupils 'must', 'should' and 'could' do in order to succeed. This system is intended to ensure that work is pitched at the right level for pupils, but it is not applied successfully in all classes. In addition, the way in which pupils evaluate their own progress in achieving these steps varies significantly from class to class.
- Teachers' use of questioning is too uneven. In some classes, it does not develop pupils' learning well enough because it focuses tasks too narrowly.
- In some classes, teaching is too rigid and, consequently, pupils do not have enough opportunity to think for themselves. Where pupils are given more open-ended challenges they make rapid progress. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils used their skills in listening and writing well as they discussed and analysed key features that make radio advertising effective.
- Consistent strengths in teaching include the good relationships between teachers and their pupils, and teachers' management of pupils. In all classes, teachers ensure that there are clear routines such as the way in which pupils are expected to respond when teachers call them to attention. These help ensure that time is not wasted.
- The quality of feedback given to pupils through teachers' marking varies considerably. At its best, some examples of marking in writing are thorough and provide clear evaluations of strengths and the improvements required. In contrast, teachers' marking in mathematics provides little written guidance for pupils.
- In almost all instances, teachers do not check that pupils act on the comments made or correct their mistakes. As a result, the same errors continue to be made.
- In English, there is consistent practice in setting targets for pupils to work towards. These are always linked to National Curriculum levels and are displayed on the pupils' tables as reminders. Consequently, pupils confidently talk about what they need to do to improve. However, in mathematics lessons, targets are far less evident and consequently pupils do not have a clear enough focus.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Parents, carers and pupils agree with the inspection findings that the pastoral care of all pupils, especially those who are potentially more vulnerable, is a strength of the school. Every pupil is known and cared for as an individual.

- The school is an orderly community in which consideration and respect for others is clearly evident. Pupils behave well. They take a pride in their school and treat books and equipment with respect.
- Pupils are eager to learn and keen to do their best. They say that the award of house points for effort is a valued incentive.
- Typically, pupils get on well with one another. They behave consistently well in lessons and move calmly and purposefully around the school. Teachers manage pupils behaviour well. There are clear systems of rewards and sanctions. These are fully understood by pupils and consistently applied.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber and racial bullying. Instances of bullying of any type are infrequent. Pupils say that most incidents result from name-calling and when these do occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Pupils are invariably attentive in lessons and concentrate on the tasks set for them. Where lessons are interesting and well paced, pupils show high levels of curiosity.
- Pupils feel safe in school, and show a keen awareness of what constitutes safe behaviour. Pupils have worked well in year groups to create safety maps of the school to highlight areas of possible concern.
- Rates of attendance and punctuality have improved since the last inspection. Attendance is in line with the national average and almost all pupils arrive on time.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because the actions taken since the last inspection have not been completely effective in improving the quality of education at the school. As a result, teaching is not yet consistently good and pupils' progress is uneven. Nonetheless, the school has made good progress in developing the use of information and communication technology as an aid to pupils' learning.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a clear vision for improvement. This is shared by staff and effectively transmitted to parents through, for example, regular newsletters.
- All members of staff work well as a team. Through shared planning of the curriculum, teachers ensure that pupils receive similar experiences in all classes within each year group. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The local authority monitors the work of the school closely and has an accurate view of its effectiveness. Support from a local leader of education has been effective in helping the school to build capacity for further improvement.
- The monitoring and evaluation carried out by senior staff is not effective enough in driving improvement at a rapid pace because some inconsistencies in teaching and learning are not being picked up and tackled.

- There are some gaps in the monitoring of pupils' progress. For instance, there are too few checks on the strengths and weaknesses in reading across all year groups. The records of the monitoring of teaching show that the judgements made are sometimes not fully supported by the evidence set out.
- The headteacher is developing a leadership structure in which more members of staff have responsibilities. However, the leadership and management skills of the recently appointed managers are not yet fully developed.
- The school provides pupils with exciting first-hand learning experiences. For example, immediately before the inspection pupils in the Year 6 classes visited the Stibbington Centre near Peterborough as they re-enacted the experiences of evacuees during the Second World War.
- The newly qualified teachers are well supported in developing their skills.
- Systems for checking on the progress made by pupils through records of teachers' assessments are more secure than they were. This is because teachers are now being held responsible for the data that is entered and accountable for their impact on the progress made by pupils.
- The school is effective in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. Policies and procedures for safeguarding are fully in place and regularly reviewed.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has recently restructured and is becoming more effective in developing the way it challenges leaders. However, it is yet to come to grips fully with the linkage between teachers' pay and performance. The governing body has a reasonable understanding of pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 and of pupils' progress. However, because school leaders do not provide a detailed enough picture of pupils' achievement, the governing body cannot hold the school leaders effectively to account. Members of the governing body carefully monitor financial resources and make sure that legal requirements are fully met, including those for keeping pupils safe. The governing body has a clear understanding of how and why the pupil premium funding is spent. It holds the school to account well in ensuring that the funding makes a difference to the experiences of disadvantaged 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>	122104
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402081

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	362
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Janet Askew
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Blackwell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 741657
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