

Maidenhall Primary School

Newark Road, Luton, LU4 8LD

Inspection dates 6–7 March 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		Requires improvement	3
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

- Actions by leaders have not yet led to enough improvements in pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
- Not enough pupils make or exceed the progress they should in English and mathematics.
- Underachieving pupils are not getting enough support to help them with weaknesses in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Boys make less progress than girls in reading and writing.
- Teachers are not setting challenging enough targets for themselves or the pupils.
- There is not enough good teaching in the school. Teachers do not always set work at the right level, check understanding, insist on good behaviour, encourage independent work or consistently mark work.
- New procedures are not fully embedded and there are four staffing vacancies in the school.
- Literacy and numeracy leaders are not involved in evaluating and monitoring pupils' progress and teaching in their subjects.
- There is insufficient sharing of good practice amongst teachers or training for support staff.

The school has the following strengths

- The leadership team has taken action to raise standards in the school and there are clear signs of improvement.
- There has been an improvement in the attendance, behaviour and uniform of the pupils.
- Pupils are presently making good progress in the Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 classes.
- Governors have taken effective action to address weaknesses in leadership and hold the school to account.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 50 lessons, of which 12 were joint observations with the acting headteacher and assistant headteachers.
- Discussions were held with the acting headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a local authority representative, senior leaders, staff and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the four responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, the 177 responses from the school's parent questionnaire from November 2012, and the 61 responses from the staff questionnaire distributed for the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of evidence, including the school self-evaluation form, the school improvement plan, the system to track pupils' progress, and records relating to behaviour and attendance. They also looked at records of lesson observations by senior staff, performance management information, safeguarding documentation, and a sample of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Stephen Walker, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Dennis Brittain	Additional Inspector
Victoria Turner	Additional Inspector
Helen Woodhouse	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from Pakistani heritage, although there are a significant number from Bangladeshi backgrounds.
- A high percentage of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The most common first languages spoken are Pahari and Bengali.
- A larger-than-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils with a parent in the armed forces and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average, whilst the proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- No pupils are presently attending any off-site alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The acting headteacher has been in post since May 2012 after the resignation of the previous headteacher. A consultant headteacher from the local authority supports the school for two days per week. A new headteacher has been appointed to take up post in April 2013.
- There has been a high rate of staff turnover at the school over the last year and there are currently four teacher vacancies being covered by temporary teachers and senior staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by making sure that all teachers:
 - plan and adjust work in lessons so that it is at the right level for all pupils
 - demand high standards of behaviour and provide activities that engage pupils
 - find opportunities for pupils to work more independently
 - check regularly pupils' understanding of what is being taught in lessons
 - use marking to show pupils how to improve their work.
- Ensure that more pupils meet and exceed expectations of progress in English and mathematics by:
 - providing effective support for all pupils who are not making the progress they should
 - ensuring that staff and pupils are working towards challenging targets which demonstrate good or better progress
 - increasing pupils' abilities and confidence in reading, writing and applying their numeracy skills
 - developing strategies to support the faster progress of boys in reading and writing.
- Develop the effectiveness of leadership and management in accelerating the improvements in the school by:
 - embedding the school's new procedures so that these are consistently applied
 - ensuring that the vacant teaching positions, including a full-time person with overall responsibility for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are filled as soon as possible

- developing the roles of the literacy and numeracy leaders so that they are fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils in their subjects
- making sure that teachers' performance targets are more sharply focused on pupils making expected or better progress, and also address specific areas for improvement in teaching
- encouraging the greater sharing of good practice in teaching and providing more professional training for support staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils are not gaining high enough standards in English and mathematics to demonstrate good progress from their well below-average starting points. Although the majority of pupils make the progress they should, there are still too many pupils who are not making enough progress in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress is lower than that found nationally.
- The large majority of pupils speak English as an additional language, and many are initially at the early stages of learning English when they arrive at the school. The school places considerable emphasis on their language development, although many pupils across the years lack confidence in their reading and writing. Subsequently, pupils have difficulties in applying their numeracy skills to solving problems due to weaknesses in reading and comprehension.
- More pupils are capable of gaining the higher levels in English and mathematics, particularly when they have gained proficiency in speaking and writing English. Targets for pupils and classes are sometimes not challenging enough, so that pupils who could make more than average progress do not achieve their full potential.
- The school has identified that boys make slower progress than girls in reading and writing. Boys are benefiting from the greater emphasis on reading in the school, as all pupils are encouraged to read at home and in school each day. The school is very active in working with parents and carers, through family workers and family literacy classes, so that they can support their children with reading at home. The emphasis on speaking and listening in some classes, and more practical guidance on how best to structure their writing, is supporting the improvement in literacy skills, particularly for boys.
- Leaders are ensuring that the assessment of pupils' progress is now more rigorous and accurate than in previous years. The revised systems for tracking pupils' progress, and the support for underachieving pupils, are leading to improved progress for many pupils. However, some pupils do not get as much help as they need to help them with weaknesses in literacy and numeracy.
- There has been an improvement in the progress of pupils over the last year but this is not consistent across all year groups. Children currently make good progress in the Reception classes because of the well-planned provision by both the teachers and the teaching assistants. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently making good progress in English and mathematics due to well-structured and effective teaching. More pupils are making the progress they should and an increasing number are exceeding expectations.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress in line with their peers. Systems are in place to support these pupils to overcome barriers to learning through small-group support outside the lessons and support in lessons. However, there is insufficient evaluation of the effectiveness of this support.
- The school is using additional funding adequately to narrow the gap between the achievement of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the other pupils. Money is mainly allocated for learning mentors and teaching assistants to provide extra support, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the attainment and progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was similar to that of the other Year 6 pupils in 2012.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although there is evidence of good or better teaching in most year groups, there are too many lessons where the quality of teaching and learning requires improvement. Teaching at the moment is too inconsistent across the school to be good overall and pupils do not make enough progress in some lessons.
- Teachers' planning does not always make sure that the activities and instruction are set at the right level for the pupils. Some pupils are not sufficiently challenged by some of the tasks because the work in lessons is sometimes too easy for them. Similarly, some pupils are unable to progress at a sufficient pace because the work is too hard and they do not completely understand the tasks.
- In a number of lessons, the work does not fully engage or capture the attention of the pupils so that they become distracted. Expectations for behaviour by some teachers are sometimes too low and pupils are allowed to drift off task.
- Not enough teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. In some lessons, pupils sit listening for too long without being actively involved or encouraged to think about the topic.
- Most teachers have a learning aim for each lesson but not enough teachers refer back to this during the lesson. Some teachers are skilled at asking questions to check on pupils' understanding but a number of teachers do not check sufficiently during the lesson whether the pupils understand the work or are making progress.
- There are a few good examples of marking, particularly in English and mathematics, with clear guidance to students on how to improve their work. However, there is inconsistency in marking across the school. In too many classes, marking is weak and does not indicate to pupils the next steps that they need to take to move their learning on.
- In most lessons, pupils are eager to learn and take part in the activities. Teachers relate well with pupils and put a great deal of time into planning their lessons. They are positive about developing their teaching skills so that they can be more effective in the classroom.
- In lessons where pupils make good or better progress, there is a very positive atmosphere for learning and teachers use questioning well to check understanding and challenge the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and also work in pairs and groups to extend their learning. For example, Year 6 pupils made rapid progress in a lesson because the teacher used questioning effectively to motivate the pupils and check on their understanding before asking them to complete work on their persuasive writing with a range of supportive resources.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Behaviour in some lessons is not good enough. A number of pupils lose concentration and become restless because the work does not always engage them and teachers' expectations of behaviour are too low.
- However, parents, carers and pupils confirm that there here has been a considerable improvement in behaviour over the last year. Teachers and pupils mention that the 'Respect Campaign' has led to better behaviour in school and a more rigorous enforcement of the school's

policy on uniform. In lessons where teaching is good, most pupils behave well and treat each other with respect and courtesy.

- Bullying of any kind is uncommon but pupils, parents and carers say that any unkind behaviour, such as name-calling and pushing, are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils develop an appropriate awareness of the different forms of possible bullying, such as prejudice-based bullying related to sexual orientation, gender, race and disability.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in the school. Teachers and adults take positive steps to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to learn in an atmosphere of fairness and trust, and without fear. There is a good level of supervision at break and lunchtime, which provides a clear framework for the pupils. Pupils have an adequate awareness of issues relating to safety and how they would keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, such as crossing the road and talking to strangers.
- The school has been successful in improving attendance and following up absences through the family workers. There are clear procedures for discouraging holidays during term time and attendance is now in line with the national average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The acting headteacher is providing clear leadership after inheriting a school with falling standards in behaviour and achievement, as well as some inadequate teaching. She has been well supported by the senior leadership team and the consultant headteacher to implement significant changes which are supporting improvements across the school. However, she has not yet been able to have enough impact on improving students' progress and the quality of teaching.
- There are clear signs that this is an improving school and there are already significant improvements in the general behaviour of pupils. The leadership has addressed issues of inadequate teaching, which has contributed to some of the staff turnover at the school. This has led to the existence of three unfilled class teaching positions which are temporarily being covered by supply teachers.
- In addition, the school does not have a full-time person who has overall responsibility for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Insufficient time is allocated to oversee the provision and progress of these pupils to ensure that they receive the most effective support.
- The leadership team has introduced new procedures to support improvements in the school. However, these are not yet fully embedded to ensure complete consistency across the school, particularly in areas such as classroom management, record keeping and assessment of pupils' progress. The majority of staff support the changes although some support staff do not feel that they are given enough professional training or support.
- There are now regular observations of lessons by the senior leaders. However, there is insufficient sharing of good practice to transform the majority of teaching to good or better. The newly appointed literacy and numeracy leaders provide valuable training for teachers but they are not yet fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching or the progress of pupils in their subjects.
- The system of performance management ensures that teachers are accountable for the progress of their pupils so that salary progression can be linked to pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. However, teachers' performance targets do not consistently refer to the percentage of

pupils making good or better progress, or the specific weaknesses in teaching.

- The organisation of subjects provides a broad range of experiences for the pupils. A number of theme days, such as the recent Victorian Day for Year 5 pupils, and various outside visits provide additional enjoyment and enrichment for the pupils. The range of experiences contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has educational links with a local Catholic school, which help to broaden pupils' horizons.
- The local authority has been active in supporting the governors to address previous weaknesses in the school. They have provided consultancy advice to the leadership team as well as training to support teachers.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body has taken action to address previous shortcomings in the leadership of the school. They have not, in the past, been given enough information on the progress of pupils or the quality of teaching. However, they are now better informed by senior leaders about the schools' strengths and areas for improvement. They have a more accurate view of teaching and pupil progress. The few decisions on salary progression over the last year have been based on rewarding senior leaders for taking on extra responsibilities in the school. Governors are fully involved in monitoring developments through the school improvement plan and in holding leaders and staff to account. They ensure that the school's procedures for safeguarding are robust and meet statutory requirements. They adequately oversee the use of the pupil premium funding and evaluate the effectiveness of this expenditure. Governors have undertaken a series of rigorous recruitment campaigns and interviews to appoint a new headteacher for the school.

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	109546
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	405241

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	628
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rashid Nazar
Headteacher	Tabassum Parkar
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2011
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