

Lockyer's Middle School

Blandford Road, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, BH21 3HQ

Inspection dates

19–20 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they do not make good progress during their time at school.
- Not enough of the teaching offers sufficient challenge to all groups of pupils, especially the more able, to keep them working at full capacity. The pace of lessons can be too slow, so pupils do not always learn as well as they should.
- Marking does not consistently show pupils the standard of their work or what they should do to improve it.
- The subjects the school offers are not well adapted to pupils' needs and interests and, with the exception of English and mathematics, do not do enough to promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills.
- The work of leaders and managers has only just started to have an impact on teaching and progress. This is because the checks made are not thorough enough and weaknesses in teaching are not always followed up rigorously.
- The information gathered from assessment and the checks made on teaching are not used regularly with sufficient rigour to bring about rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and learning or to hold teachers sufficiently to account.
- The governing body does not have enough information about whether the pupil premium is spent effectively or what impact this is having on pupils' progress and attainment.

The school has the following strengths

- Behaviour is good. There are warm, constructive relationships throughout the school and pupils report they feel safe. Bullying is very rare and well dealt with by staff if it should occur.
- The new leadership and management team is getting to grips with the school and has started to bring about reforms and speed up pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 27 lessons taught by 24 teachers.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, representatives of the governing body and a local authority officer.
- Inspectors examined numerous school documents including policies, assessment information, planning documents and records of all kinds.
- The views of 33 parents were analysed through the Parent View website. A school survey of parents' opinions was also analysed.

Inspection team

John Carnaghan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Louise Sharples	Additional Inspector
Paul Rushforth	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Lockyer's is an average-sized middle school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families) is below average. There are a small number of pupils from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has a higher-than-average turnover of pupils.
- The school does not use alternative provision for its pupils off site.
- At the time of the inspection, the school had no pupils on the Year 7 catch-up programme.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2011 and a new leadership team was appointed from September 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and raise achievement through:
 - making sure that the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able, are met by providing work at the correct level to keep them working at full stretch
 - maintaining a brisk pace throughout lessons by setting high expectations for pupils' progress
 - marking work thoroughly so all pupils know the standard of their work and what to do to improve it.
- Develop the impact of leadership and management by:
 - following up the areas of concern in teaching more rigorously to eliminate weaknesses
 - carrying out more frequent assessments of pupils' progress and using this information to hold teachers more firmly to account for pupils' achievement
 - making sure members of the governing body follow up how the pupil premium is spent and check that this provides good value for money.
- Developing the range of subjects and experiences offered by the school so that:
 - literacy and numeracy skills are developed in all subjects
 - the school offers more stimulating and exciting experiences that are better suited to pupils' needs and interests.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are higher than those expected for their age. They leave school with above expected attainment. This means that they do not make good enough progress.
- Within this pattern there are some variations. The progress of pupils in mathematics has exceeded that in English in past years but changes in leadership has led to more consistent teaching in English and currently progress is similar in both subjects.
- More-able pupils progress more slowly than the others. This is because teaching too often does not provide work that stimulates these pupils sufficiently and makes sure they are working to their maximum capability. Pupils' achievement therefore requires improvement.
- Assessment information is now available to staff in increasing quantities, although tests are sometimes too far apart to track pupils accurately. This information is increasingly but inconsistently used to plan more effective lessons with the result that progress is starting to speed up across some areas of the school.
- Staff use assessment information to select groups of pupils who would benefit from additional support. These individuals are soon put on suitable learning programmes and enjoy personal support in small groups and individually. In this way, despite some weaknesses in the analysis of the gains they are making, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to the rest of their friends. The school provides equality of opportunity for most and makes sure there is no discrimination.
- Pupils in receipt of additional government funds, the pupil premium, have improving average points scores compared to others, closing previous gaps in achievement. This is because the school plans the distribution of such funds well to meet these pupils' needs, although it has not as yet involved the governing body in this. The gap in achievement between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the others in the school is one term behind in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. There are too few looked-after children to judge variations in their achievement.
- The best progress in lessons occurs when pupils have varied, interesting activities to do and can participate fully in their own learning. For example, a good science lesson on measuring speed started with a quick, clear recap on what had been covered. Then pupils went onto the playground to time one another as they walked, ran and hopped over a measured distance. Pupils enjoyed this, responding well to the teacher's calm but firm management. They were thus well equipped to embark on calculations to show numerically the variations in speed that they had observed.
- However, this lively, well-planned lesson is not typical. Too much learning sees all pupils working on the same routine activities that fail to inspire them to rapid progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In many lessons teachers do not plan and teach work that is suited to the full range of pupils' abilities. The teaching of one type of activity aimed at middle-ability pupils slows the progress of those with above- and below-average levels of attainment.
- However, pupils with lower-than-expected attainment levels often benefit from assistance from teaching assistants who know them personally, understand their learning needs and adjust what the teacher is doing to make learning more accessible. This helps these pupils' progress and means it is similar to the others.
- More-able pupils frequently find the work they are doing does not stretch them. Where additional work is planned for these groups, pupils often have to work through what are for them too simple activities before they move on to work that is at the right level. As a result, learning for more-able pupils is often too slow and, over time, their progress is not good

enough.

- There are variations in the way pupils' work is marked. Teachers' marking can be irregular and does not consistently provide the quality and detail of advice required for pupils to know the standard of their work and what to do to improve it.
- Some teaching does not set the right expectations for the pace of pupils' work. Many lessons start briskly but, when pupils are set to work on their own, they have no deadline so that there is a lack of urgency to learning. Lessons sometimes do not engage pupils fully in learning because teachers do not select the most interesting resources.
- Lessons benefit from positive relationships between pupils and with adults. This means that lessons face very little disruption from inappropriate behaviour and pupils work very well together.
- Teachers have good subject understanding and use their skills to ask pertinent questions and promote engagement with their subject. Pupils show an enthusiasm for learning, even when the activity is not that interesting.
- The best lessons have drive and energy. They are well planned to offer brief, interesting activities that are well adapted to each pupil's needs. Pupils are challenged to work quickly, are well questioned to check understanding and work is well summed up in the closing elements of the lesson. However, these good features are not consistent yet across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Both pupils and parents rightly report that behaviour is good and they have no significant concerns. Pupils show maturity and good sense when moving around the convoluted site to go to lessons and at break-times.
- Classrooms are calm and purposeful and there are very few disturbances to learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour with calm assurance, fostering positive relationships.
- Pupils are well informed about the various types of bullying and know what to do if they spot any. They know about the possibilities of cyber bullying and how to avoid it and who it should be reported to. They say bullying is rare at Lockyer's; this is confirmed by school records. Pupils are confident that the rare occurrences of bullying are effectively dealt with by school staff.
- Pupils feel safe at school and are well briefed in personal, social and health education lessons on how to stay safe in their everyday lives. Attendance is above average and has been for a number of years.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The checks leaders and managers make on teaching and other areas provide clear information about strengths and weaknesses, so the school has a growing awareness of areas for concern. These have not been always followed up rigorously. The result of this is that teaching is inconsistent in quality and does not promote learning well enough.
- The headteacher has led the recent introduction of a system for assessing pupils' progress and for recording this information. Many pupils are not tested often enough and six months can elapse between the times they are formally checked. This means that when progress declines for individuals or groups, it is not always noticed and prompt action is not taken.
- Not all staff use assessment information properly. Teachers do not all use assessment information to check their pupils' progress. Senior staff do not ask individual teachers to account for variations in the progress of the pupils they teach, missing an opportunity to hold individual staff to account.
- The school has worked hard to make sure that teachers' pay matches their responsibilities. Historic anomalies are being corrected. The process of tying higher pay scales to better performance is underway and is beginning to have a positive impact on teachers' performance.

- The headteacher and new senior leadership team are bringing in numerous reforms to raise attainment and improve teaching. However, while progress is speeding up, the impact of these relatively recent changes is not yet fully evident. The school's understanding of areas for development and the quality of its planning for the future means that it has the capacity to improve. The local authority offers good support to the school by supporting leaders in the checks they make on its work.
 - The mixture of subjects offered meets requirements but is rarely planned or delivered in interesting ways by, for example, developing pupils' skills through tackling interesting themes or linking subjects together adventurously. This makes it more difficult to plan interesting lessons. Apart from in English and mathematics lessons, the promotion of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is variable across different subjects. A growing range of clubs provides some interesting opportunities, for example a chamber choir has recently been established.
 - The promotion of Lockyer's as a 'rights respecting school' develops pupils' moral and social awareness well and this is clearly evident in their positive behaviour. An assembly led by a local conservationist broadened pupils' understanding of nearby heathlands and gave them an opportunity to reflect on the variety and wonders of nature. The school has done little to promote pupils' cultural understanding.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is aware that additional government funds, such as the pupil premium, come into the school but has not influenced how they are distributed or analysed the way this money has had an impact on pupils' progress and development.
 - Governors display an understanding of achievement and teaching at the school that is based on the independent checks they make on school activities. They have a good grasp of the school's attainment information and how it compares nationally.
 - Members are well aware of teachers' performance and how well pay is aligned to this. They strongly support the school's efforts to develop greater accountability among staff and know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance.
 - The governing body takes full advantage of the opportunities the local authority offers for training to improve its capabilities.
 - Careful checks on pupil and staff safety underpin the school's good procedures and make sure that all safeguarding requirements are met.
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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	113862
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	413176

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	457
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ernie Battey
Headteacher	Mark Legge
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 November 2009
Telephone number	01202 692779
Fax number	01202 692779
Email address	office@lockyersmid.dorset.sch.uk

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