

# Little Green Junior School

Lincoln Drive, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 3NJ

**Inspection dates** 10–11 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Standards, particularly in reading and mathematics, are above average at Year 6.
- Teaching is good. Some aspects of assessment are thorough and effective. Relationships are a strength.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium funding make good progress across the school. Their attainment is close to that of the other pupils.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils enjoy school and say that they feel safe.
- Senior leaders, managers and governors have ensured that good teaching and achievement have been sustained. Senior leaders set a clear direction for the school's future development.
- Governance is effective. Governors are aware of the school's areas for improvement and are knowledgeable about the management of staff performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as rapid as in reading and mathematics, although improvements are coming through quickly as a result of recent staff training.
- There are some inconsistencies in assessment. Good practice in the marking of writing is not yet evident in other subjects.
- There are missed opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum. Some pupils have poorly formed handwriting. Written work is not always neatly presented.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, of which four were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, the school’s subject and senior leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 99 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of school documentation, including: records of school checks on the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding, and the tracking of pupils’ progress. They also looked closely at pupils’ written work and listened to pupils reading.

## Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Janet Tomkins	Additional Inspector
Hermione Horn	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Little Green is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- Pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds. Around one-tenth of pupils are from Asian families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by 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 for whom the school receives pupil premium funding (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in care and those with a parent or carer in the armed services) is well below the national average. Currently, there are no pupils from forces families on roll.
- The great majority of pupils enter the school from its partner infant school.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils.

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

- Build upon current initiatives to improve pupils' achievement in writing, ensuring that teachers:
  - provide more planned opportunities throughout the school for pupils to develop their independent writing skills in subjects across the curriculum
  - set consistently high expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' written work
  - implement and sustain, in conjunction with the partner infant school, an agreed approach to the teaching of handwriting.
- Ensure that current effective practice in the marking of pupils' writing is replicated in the other subjects, so that pupils receive clearer guidance as to the next steps in their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. However, it is usually higher in reading and mathematics than in writing. Standards in mathematics rose significantly in 2013, with more pupils achieving the challenging Level 6. Pupils generally enter the school at levels above, and increasingly well above, those expected. In all year groups currently, many pupils are working at levels above those appropriate to their age.
- Achievement is good. While progress in Years 4 to 6 appears to be good year-on-year, progress in Year 3 has typically seemed relatively slow, when related to official entry data. However, extensive retained evidence, covering several years, successfully validates the school's own rigorous evaluation of pupils' attainment on entry. As a result, pupils' progress can be demonstrated to be good throughout their time in the school, and to a greater extent than the official data suggests.
- Progress in reading is good. Recent staff training and the implementation of a programme to ensure that pupils understand the links between letters and sounds (phonics) is facilitating the provision of additional support for any pupils with deficits in their understanding.
- Identified weaknesses in pupils' writing have been addressed through staff training. While this has driven clear improvement in Years 3, 4 and 5, there has been less impact for the current Year 6. Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum are not consistently developed. There is no common approach to the teaching of handwriting in this school and the partner infant school. As a result, not all pupils have well-formed, legible handwriting.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Effectively targeted support is ensuring that progress continues to improve. The coordinator rigorously evaluates the impact of all interventions.
- In 2012, the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium in Year 6 was the equivalent of less than one term below that of other pupils in both English and mathematics. The school has used the additional funding to provide individual tuition and access to counselling and support where necessary, and this is enabling these pupils to catch up. Current eligible pupils are making progress at least as rapid as the others, so that the gap has narrowed further in 2013.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching over time ensures that pupils make sustained good progress in the development of their key skills. Consistent approaches to classroom practice and close monitoring of pupils' learning ensure that pupils' experiences are motivating and promote learning well over time.
- Many lessons are now good, with some evidence of outstanding practice. In a particularly effective Year 3 lesson, supporting the writing skills of a small group of pupils who were disabled or who had special educational needs, the tasks were engaging and motivating. Pupils were asked to find exciting adjectives to enable their sentences to come alive. The language task provided real challenge and was grasped enthusiastically by the pupils. Their engagement and behaviour for learning were outstanding, with activities very precisely matched to their skill

levels. Pupils knew exactly what they needed to do to move their learning on.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn at least at a similar pace to others. Support staff are generally effective, ensuring that pupils sustain their efforts throughout each lesson.
- In most classes, pupils' written work is neatly-presented and of good quality. Nonetheless, there are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations, leading to occasional examples of untidy presentation and work of a poorer standard than is typical. Not all teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in a wide range of subjects. This is particularly the case for younger pupils. Occasionally, teachers default to the use of worksheets, which constrain the development of pupils' independence.
- There are robust procedures for checking and assessing pupils' progress. Pupils have individual targets which are checked and renewed regularly. There are some opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others. While there is some exemplary practice in the marking of writing, not all subjects are thoroughly marked. As yet, there are inconsistencies, particularly in mathematics, in the quality of guidance pupils receive on the next steps in their learning.

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

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Behaviour in lessons is never less than good; low level disruption is rare. At times, pupils are rather diffident in lessons and reluctant to offer their ideas because teachers do not always promote a sufficiently active approach to learning.
- There are well-established procedures to address poor behaviour. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Recorded racist incidents are rare. Pupils are consistently polite. None of the parents and carers who gave their views indicated any concerns about behaviour.
- Pupils speak highly of the school's positive ethos. They feel that behaviour is good and that they are safe in school at all times. They understand that they are here to work hard and succeed and are certain that the adults in school will sort out any difficulties.
- Pupils feel that bullying is not an issue, while recognising that bullying may take different forms. They are aware of the risks presented by social-networking sites. The school encourages pupils to undertake responsibilities which enable them to contribute to the community.
- Pupils have a good awareness of risk and know how to stay safe in different circumstances, in relation, for example, to fire, road traffic and the internet. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for moving to secondary school. The annual 'year book', a document of exceptional quality, provides a permanent record of the experiences and learning of each Year 6 cohort as they leave the school.
- Pupils who feel vulnerable may access nurture groups which enhance pupils' emotional well-being and their personal confidence.
- Attendance is consistently above average. Few pupils arrive late.

## The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders set a clear direction for school development, driving key developments such as the robust programme for improving teachers' skills through the 'paired teacher' approach, and tackling weaker aspects of achievement, such as writing, through well-judged initiatives. Middle leaders, responsible for specific subjects, can demonstrate a good awareness of school performance and, as a result of their efforts, a significant impact upon pupils' progress.
- School self-evaluation is accurate. The school development plan identifies appropriate priorities and actions to promote sustained improvement, most recently in mathematics and reading.
- Good teaching has been sustained through effective monitoring by senior and middle leaders, although observations do not always give sufficient prominence to the progress pupils are making. Identified weaknesses are followed up through the robust performance management system. There is a well-established link between teachers' performance and pay progression. Staff recognise that they are accountable for the progress pupils make. Systems for the analysis of school progress data are exceptionally thorough.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place to support the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. The curriculum, while fundamentally traditional, offers breadth and good coverage, although provision for science is inconsistent in quality between classes and across year groups. Despite recent improvements, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' writing skills, including handwriting, across a range of subjects. Pupils experience a wide range of theme days, workshops, visits and visitors.
- The support provided by the local authority has been consistent with the school's successful track record. Support has increased recently, in line with local authority policy, and is currently good.
- School leaders now closely monitor the impact of pupil premium funding. This funding is contributing to greater gains in learning for identified pupils.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is a strength. Pupils show good moral awareness. Cultural opportunities are well-developed. There is a focus on promoting pupils' leadership skills. Links with parents and carers, with the community and with diverse places of worship are good. School displays celebrate pupils' awareness of other cultures and religions.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is a strength. Governors undertake training and confidently evaluate information relating to pupils' performance and the school's effectiveness. Governors assess the impact of teaching on pupils' progress, comparing outcomes to national performance data. They hold school leaders to account in relation to pupils' performance, although evidence of challenge is not rigorously recorded in the minutes of meetings. They have, for example, recognised that outcomes in writing have been weaker than in other areas. They recognise the need to ensure equality of opportunity, to tackle discrimination and to foster good relationships.
  - Governors have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and a close knowledge of performance management matters. They ensure that pay and promotion are firmly linked to teachers' effectiveness and support the headteacher in tackling underperformance. They manage the budget well and have become more rigorous in evaluating the impact of decisions about the use of pupil premium funding to close gaps in pupils' achievement. Governors ensure, along with senior leaders, that safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements.

## 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>	117132
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	424608

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	359
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Lloyd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Graham Metcalfe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01923 773861
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